

BRAVO

Celebrating San Francisco Opera Its Italian Roots and Legacy

Exclusively sponsored by

W. E. L. Wiegand
Foundation



MUSEO
ITALO AMERICANO

NEWS
LETTER

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JULY • SEPTEMBER 2023



Preserving Our Italian Heritage & Culture

MUSEO ITALO AMERICANO

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By appointment only

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The list on this page includes donations received from **January 1, 2023 to May 31, 2023** and are exclusive of donations made to the Capital Campaign. Our sincere apologies if any names were inadvertently omitted.

Paola Bagnatori, Sandra Bagnatori, Miriam & Andrew Canepa, Kathleen & James Clarke, Linda Cozzarelli, Ruth & Dan DeNardi, Julie Dickson, Elvia & Federico Faggini, Vincent Fausone, Michael Feno, Nancy Fleming Lange, Donna & Steve Gothelf, Grants for the Arts, The Haugland Family Foundation, Steve Lavezzoli, Fred Levinson, Angela Little, Margaret & Luigi Lucaccini, Mazel Immigration Law, Roger Mertz, Maria Micale & Philip Farrocco, Elisabetta Nelsen, Richard Cardello & Johnnie Norway, Annie Nunan, Barbara & Tom O'Connell, Barbro & Bernard Osher, John Palmer, Susan D. Peterson, Maria Gloria & Anthony Rando, Lisa Bagnatori & Andrew Ross, Jennifer Scannella, Lorraine & Kevin Shuba, Diane Termini, Evelyn Wegienka.

The Museo celebrates its 45th Anniversary!

North Beach roots

The Museo Italo Americano was founded in 1978 by Giuliana Nardelli Haight as the first museum in the United States devoted exclusively to Italian and Italian-American art and culture. Its first home in 1978 was in a room above Malvina's Cafe on the corner of Union Street and Cadell Place. Having outgrown its original home and subsequent space at Casa Fugazi, in 1985 the Museo moved to its present location at Fort Mason.

Original art and cultural exhibitions and Permanent Collection

With the support of art patrons such as the late Modesto Lanzone, the Museo has mounted original exhibitions of Italian and Italian-American artists early in their careers, such as Jay DeFeo and Bill Viola, who have gone on to become notable international artists. Thanks to the generosity of Bay Area art patrons, over the years, the Museo has acquired an impressive Permanent Collection of paintings, sculptures, photographs and works on paper. Many of these artworks have been presented in curated shows at the Museo. Along with art exhibits the Museo has had many successful documentary shows such as: *The Ghetto*, *Italian Americans at Bat*, *Italian American Cinema*.

Ongoing Italian language classes & cultural programs

Throughout the years, the Museo has offered popular Italian language classes taught by native speakers in the Museo's space and now also online. The Museo presents lectures on a wide range of cultural topics such as the recent "Who's Afraid of Opera?" talk presented by Kip Cranna, SF Opera Emeritus Dramaturg.

Plans for the future Museo home - The Jerome Cocuzza Italian Center

Thanks to the generosity of the late Jerome Cocuzza, who bequeathed the Museo a warehouse at 940 Battery Street near North Beach, the Museo will have a permanent home. A particular exhibit entitled: *In Cerca di Una Nuova Vita* is the basis for what will be a floor dedicated to the history of Italians in California and the West in the Jerome Cocuzza Italian Center. We will have two levels to exhibit our permanent collection as well as other exhibits. Our ongoing Capital Campaign is hard at work to make all this possible.

We are making a full circle to our North Beach roots. We plan on celebrating our 50th Anniversary in our new home.



↑ Pictured in this 1984 photo are three of the Museo's early pioneers with then mayor of San Francisco, Dianne Feinstein.

From left to right: Museo Managing Director, Paola Bagnatori; Museo Founder, Giuliana Nardelli Haight; Dianne Feinstein; former Museo Board President, Modesto Lanzone.

We would like to express our gratitude to our members, guests and friends who attended the exhibition opening night on May 4th. Your presence and support made the event a success! The positive energy and genuine appreciation you showed truly exemplify the spirit of our creative community. Your attendance not only demonstrated your individual support but also contributed to the collective ambiance, fostering an environment of inspiration and artistic exchange.

San Francisco Opera’s Kip Cranna and Barbara Rominski’s dedication to sharing the rich history and cultural significance of opera added an extra layer of depth and appreciation to the exhibition. Their insights provided a window into the lives and contributions of the remarkable individuals who have left an indelible mark on the opera scene in San Francisco.

We also want to thank soprano Delcina Stevenson and her family for visiting us all the way from Los Angeles. Her contributions as one of the first “Merolini” of the Merola Opera Program were truly inspirational.

We are grateful to our partners, the San Francisco Opera, and the Museum of Performance + Design for their invaluable help in developing Bravo, an original exhibition by the Museo and exclusively sponsored by E. L. Wiegand Foundation.



↑ Kip Cranna during the tour of the exhibit at the BRAVO opening night on May 4th.



↑ Barbara Rominski during the tour of the exhibit at the BRAVO opening night on May 4th.

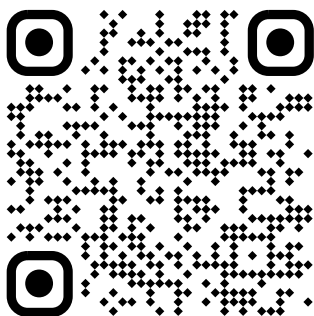


↑ Guests at the BRAVO exhibition opening night on May 4th.



↑ Delcina Stevenson and her son visiting from Los Angeles. From left: Barbara Rominski, Delcina Stevenson, Brian Stevenson, Jon Finck.

↓ Scan the QR code with your phone to listen to Delcina Stevenson’s interview for the BRAVO exhibition.



We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to Kip Cranna, San Francisco Dramaturg Emeritus and author of the *BRAVO* exhibition, for his captivating and enjoyable talk on the history of Italian opera, titled *Who's Afraid of Opera*. The lecture, which took place on May 11th, was an enlightening journey into the world of opera, accompanied by captivating photos, videos, and epic opera music. Cranna's extensive knowledge and passion for the subject were evident throughout the talk, making it an engaging and educational experience for all attendees.



↑ Laura Krumm, Craig Reiss, Maya Cohon, Joy Fellows, Thalia Moore, and Kip Cranna during the concert on June 1st. *Picture courtesy of Celso David Viviani*

A special thank you to the incredible Eos Ensemble and the mesmerizing mezzo-soprano, Laura Krumm, for the unforgettable concerts on Thursday, June 1st, and Saturday, June 3rd!

The sheer talent and artistry displayed by the Eos Ensemble were truly awe-inspiring. Craig Reiss, Maya Cohon, Joy Fellows, and Thalia Moore showcased exceptional skill and precision, weaving together a harmonious tapestry of melodies. The collective passion and dedication of the ensemble members were palpable, creating an immersive musical experience that captivated our senses.

Laura Krumm's mezzo-soprano voice resonated with unparalleled beauty and emotion. Her remarkable vocal range and expressive interpretation brought each piece to life. It was a privilege to witness her captivating performance and be moved by her incredible talent.



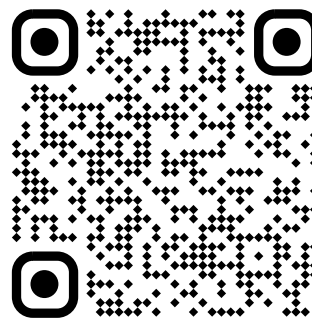
↑ Frank Brucia. *Picture courtesy of Jon Draper*

After the opening of the *BRAVO* exhibition our hearts were saddened by the news of Frank Brucia's passing.

Frank was the son of Giuseppe Brucia, one of the founding members of San Francisco Opera, also known for having pioneered the olive industry in California.

Frank and Giuseppe are both featured in our exhibition. We were very fortunate to have met Frank in person and listened to his amazing stories.

You can watch an excerpt of Frank's interview by using the QR code below



Great Job Steve and Alex!

The Museo would like to thank both Steve Gill and Alex Perez for their outstanding performance at the "Simply Sinatra: The Loneliness of the Long Distance Singer" concert, and the wonderful members of the public for purchasing tickets and making generous donations.

The proceeds from the concert went towards supporting LightHouse for the Blind - San Francisco Bay Area an organization working with the Museo to improve accessibility both online and in person.

We could not have achieved such a successful event without your support. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

→ Mark Schiavenza presenting Steve Gill and Alex Perez at *Simply Sinatra: The Loneliness of the Long Distance Singer* concert on April 30th.

