

## Opera at Its Best!

Anthony Julian Tamburri (January 14, 2013)



Luciano Lamonarca is president of the Puglia Center in America, which promotes the Region of Puglia in all its aspects, especially in the creation and exchanges of cultural, tourist and educational assets between the Puglia region of Italy and the United States of America. First and foremost, however, Luciano is an accomplished tenor in his own right, as you will hear when you access his



commemorative site to Mario Del Monaco.

**On September 6, the world of opera commemorated the 5th anniversary since Maestro Luciano Pavarotti's passing. He was indeed considered one of the greatest tenors of the 20th Century. Tenor Luciano Lamonarca, on October 24th 2012, commemorated yet another famous Italian tenor, Mario Del Monaco.**

Luciano, why did you decide to commemorate Mario Del Monaco?

Mario Del Monaco was and it is considered one of the best tenors ever, and especially the Greatest Tenor of the 20th Century. October, as many of us know, is the Italian Cultural Month in the US, and I do believe in the need to honor and remember those great Italian personalities who brought outstanding contributions to the field of science, medicine, and the arts. Similarly and especially, we should not forget about opera and *il bel canto*, for which the whole world looks up to us.

Your event was one of many. How many other events around the world were organized to commemorate Mario Del Monaco?

There were many concerts around the world, but the most important, in my opinion, was the one performed last August 2, 2012, at the Stiffelio's Theater, in Macerata, Marche, where a stellar cast reunited to celebrate Maestro Del Monaco. The sopranos Daniela Dessi and Fiorenza Cedolins, tenor Fabio Armiliato and the Basso Roberto Scandiuizzi were all there to celebrate Del Monaco. The event was produced by the worldwide famous stage director, Maestro Giancarlo Del Monaco, son of tenor Mario Del Monaco.

Tell us a little bit about Mario Del Monaco? Why should we remember who he was?

As mentioned, Mario Del Monaco was and will certainly remain the greatest dramatic tenor for generations. He performed *Otello* 427 times on stage. An incomparable record! Thousands of pages would be needed to describe who Mario Del Monaco was, but I would like to describe him by recalling those words used by Maestro Giancarlo Del Monaco, who is, as I said, Mario Del Monaco's son, and, in his own right, a famous stage director of international acclaim: "Mario Del Monaco was not only a tenor. Mario Del Monaco was the complete artist who besides a metallic and powerful voice, was gifted with an interpretative instinct which enabled him to identify himself with any character he performed, thanks also to his great charisma, acting skills and diction that made him unique and incomparable!" Beside *Otello*, his leading roles were: Canio in *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo), Radames in *Aida* (Verdi), Don Jose in *Carmen* (Bizet), Chenier in *Andrea Chénier* (Giordano), Manrico in *Il Trovatore* (Verdi), Samson in *Samson and Delilah* (Saint-Saëns), and Don Alvaro in *La forza del destino* (Verdi).

You are a tenor as well. How have you been affected by the voice and the personality of Del Monaco in your professional carrier?

My carrier and my love for the opera was born thanks to Mario Del Monaco. When I was a teenager I was in love with classical music, and in fact I did study clarinet at the "U. Giordano" Conservatory, in Foggia (Italy), for many years. It happened all by chance. I never was very impressed by the current opera stars, but one day I faced the "event" that changed my life. Mario Del Monaco was a very popular tenor, so it happened that even when he retired as a professional opera singer, he was asked to perform and record a few LPs, with Neapolitan and new songs. One of these songs was the famous "*Un Amore Così Grande*", composed by Guido Maria Ferrilli and arranged by Detto Mariano specifically for the voice of Mario Del Monaco. Well, on the 25th anniversary of my parents' wedding, that was on January 23, 1996, the DJ selected this song, performed by Mario Del Monaco, for dessert. That was it! I remember the exact moment - it was 05:58pm. I was mesmerized by that powerful and amazing voice. It overwhelmed me like a delicious storm and changed me forever. It was what I call "Love at first listen"! After that experience, I completely felt in love with opera, and I became a great fan of Mario Del Monaco. He made me discover my own vocal abilities, start my studies, and it happened that I also possess a dramatic voice. Often, when I have to perform a certain aria or song, I listen to his recording and find inspiration.



So, you decided to honor his memory as well, launching an online project, last October 24, 2012, entitled "[Remembering Mario Del Monaco](#) [2]". Tell us a more about your online music project.

Because of my love and respect for Mario Del Monaco, I thought that I should pay my tribute to this great artist. I put together in an on-line project of information about him for those who are not familiar with his great career. On this web page you will find access to a series of information about the life of Maestro Del Monaco, the opera "Pagliacci" and its most famous aria "Recitar... Vesti La Giubba!" Interestingly, the opera "Pagliacci" had its world premiere in 1892, 120 years ago. You can also read a letter from Del Monaco's son, Giancarlo Del Monaco, explaining the importance of commemorating the tenor Del Monaco. Finally, you will find my version of the famous aria "Vesti La Giubba!" in mp3 format (thanks to the contribution of Musical Concept who arranged and offered the orchestra version) and which could be downloaded free of charge.

**Related Links:** [http://www.lucianolamonarca.com/remembering/index\\_eng.php](http://www.lucianolamonarca.com/remembering/index_eng.php) [3]

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Suadc6VQ1JE> [4]

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mario\\_Del\\_Monaco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mario_Del_Monaco) [5]

<http://www.mariodelmonaco.net/lang1/index.html> [6]

**Source URL:** <http://newsite.iitaly.org/magazine/focus/op-eds/article/opera-its-best>

#### Links

[1] <http://newsite.iitaly.org/files/35146delmonaco1358219578jpg>

[2] [http://www.lucianolamonarca.com/remembering/index\\_eng.php#!prettyPhoto/12/](http://www.lucianolamonarca.com/remembering/index_eng.php#!prettyPhoto/12/)

[3] [http://www.lucianolamonarca.com/remembering/index\\_eng.php](http://www.lucianolamonarca.com/remembering/index_eng.php)

[4] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Suadc6VQ1JE>

[5] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mario\\_Del\\_Monaco](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mario_Del_Monaco)

[6] <http://www.mariodelmonaco.net/lang1/index.html>