

## A Class Act

# Marianne Cornetti Wows Audience in Stunning Performance

*Concert Raises \$54,000 for Library & Music Hall Campaign and Operating Funds*

It was an event rivaling New York's Carnegie Hall – but it was *Carnegie's* Carnegie Music Hall where hundreds of patrons reveled in a stunning Nov. 20 performance by internationally acclaimed opera star Marianne Cornetti.

Cornetti performed more than a dozen opera arias and popular songs by such artists as Verdi, Cilea, Donizetti, De Curtis and Gounod. She brought audience members to their feet three times, rewarding them with an equal number of encores. A portico created for Stage 62's recent production of "Once Upon a Mattress" provided the perfect operatic backdrop for Cornetti's outstanding performance.

Music critic Eric Haines of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette used such accolades as "knockout" and "blockbuster" to describe Cornetti's performance. "Consummate artistry aside, the draw with Cornetti was the voice itself. It's the huge, natural instrument of a true Verdi mezzo," Haines wrote.

A native of Cabot in nearby Butler County, Cornetti paused near the end of the concert to reflect on the time her mother urged her to follow her dreams. She urged the audience to "keep the dream alive" for the aging library and music hall by persevering with efforts to restore, renovate and revitalize the historic landmark. She then sang a stirring rendition of "Climb Every Mountain" from *The Sound of Music*.

The benefit concert raised \$54,000 for the Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall. The proceeds will benefit the \$8.6 million capital campaign and provide operating funds for the facility.

Jim Cunningham of WQED, who served as master of ceremonies, pointed out to the audience that the Music Hall is modeled after New York's Carnegie Hall and is "acoustically excellent." Cornetti was accompanied by pianist Mark Trawka, director of musical studies for the Pittsburgh Opera Center.

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*Eric Haines*

*Music Critic Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*



*Bill Manby and Bill Pyle – Class of '51 – get together on the Music Hall balcony while Marianne Cornetti warms up on stage below. Manby co-chairs the campaign with Charlie Goetz.*

Patrons attending the dinner were treated to an elegant pre-concert supper in the newly refurbished Reception Hall. All concert-goers were invited to a fabulous post-concert dessert reception. The newly installed elevator – funded through Phase I of the campaign – premiered for its first public event that evening.

Cornetti, who joined concert attendees at the reception, is one of opera's most exciting Verdi voices. In the past two seasons, she has made international debuts at theaters including the Teatro alla Scala Milan, Vienna State Opera, Teatro Carlo Felice, Genova, Teatro Dell'Opera di Roma, Teatro Bellini, Catania, at the Arena di Verona and in Tokyo.

She has won unanimous acclaim as Amneris in *Aida*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Eboli in *Don Carlos* and as the Principessa di Bouillon in *Ariana Lecouvreur*. Her recent recording with Placido Domingo in the opera *Edgar* by Puccini, will be released on the Sony Label in December 2005.

A graduate of Duquesne University with a major in vocal performance, Cornetti undertook graduate studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Manhattan School of Music and at EPCASO Oderzo in Italy. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette recently named Cornetti to its list of Top 50 Pittsburgh expatriates who continue to represent the city's artistic culture, even after they've left town.

## Marianne Cornetti Benefit Supporters

*The Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall gratefully acknowledges the following individuals, organizations and companies who generously supported the ACFL&MH through their contributions to the Marianne Cornetti Benefit Concert on Nov. 20, as well as the many concert goers who attended the benefit.*

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*Rose Ann John, a member of the Event Steering Committee and Blue Ribbon Committee, beams with pleasure at the evening affair.*



*Dolores Barber, a close friend of Marianne Cornetti and a member of the Event Steering Committee and Blue Ribbon Committee, with her husband John.*

*Special thanks to all the volunteers and generous attendees who helped make the event such a success. Our heartfelt thanks go to members of the Event Steering Committee for their hard work and support.*

*Steering Committee members are: Dolores Smith Barber and Dr. John Barber, Nadine Bognar, Jean and Sigo Falk, Barbara and Ted Frantz, Clare and Charles Goetz, Katie and Tucker Gordon, Amy Janocha, Rose and Michael Kutsenkow, Katie and Jim Leyland, Betsy Martin, Diane and Ron Moehler, Molly Stockdale and Chris Ott, Kaveri Subbarao and Jonathan Nauhaus, and Judy and Tom Thompson*

# Marianne Cornetti Benefit Concert

Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall

November 20, 2005



Baseball fan  
Marianne Cornetti with  
opera enthusiast  
Lanny Frustare.

The Music Hall glows as Marianne  
Cornetti and pianist Mark Trawka  
warm up on stage.

David and Pearl Figgins with Marianne Cornetti.



John and Alex O'Brien

Long-time ACFL&MH supporters  
Joanne Bevilacqua Weiss and Dottie  
Florence meet up at the concert.

Ted Franz, another Campaign Steering Committee  
member, and wife Barbara came in from Deep Creek  
Ald. for the event.

Frank and Ann Cahouett came with their  
daughter Ann, representing event sponsor Reed  
Smith. Pictured with Maggie Forbes (right),  
acting executive director and campaign manager.

Cornetti fans (pictured left to right): Ed and Gene Smith, Stan Russell, Dolores Smith  
Barber, Carol Russell, John Barber, Camille Goern with her special Cornetti purse,  
John and Nancy Trina, and Harry Goern.





*Bob and Shirley Gordon — two members of the large Gordon clan who came to the benefit*

*Family friend Margaret Anderson with Marianne's high school principal Regis Schiebel*

*Ed Leser and Mary Ellen Dahlkemper with WQED's Jim Cunningham, who served as emcee for the concert.*



*Campaign Co-Chair Charlie Goetz congratulates Marianne on her fabulous performance.*



*Campaign Steering Committee member Bill English first heard Marianne sing at his church.*

*Sandy Welsh (left) with Martha Perry of McCune Foundation, Ken and Ann Marie Helms of the Richard King Mellon Foundation, and Audrey Brouman.*



*Carnegie Players Ron Wilson and Phil Salvato added musical ambiance to the pre concert supper*