

# Franco Martorana



*“La voco d’ oro”  
A golden voice*

James King



A native of Geneva, Switzerland, Franco Martorana was born to be an opera singer. The son of a Sicilian tenor, Franco spent his formative years surrounded by the recordings of the great tenors of the past.

As a young boy, his parents brought him to the United States, where he received his education. After discovering his voice as a teen, Franco knew he wanted to pursue the career of an opera singer.

Following a few years of vocal training, as well as a number of concerts and recitals, the young tenor made his operatic stage debut with the Lincoln Opera Company as Alfredo in a production of Johann Strauss’ *Die Fledermaus*. During his years with Lincoln Opera, which was located on Chicago’s North Side, Franco essayed such roles as Camille de Rossillon in the *Merry Widow*, Alfredo in

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La Traviata, and Pinkerton in Madama Butterfly and Turiddu in Cavalleria Rusticana. During this time while Lincoln Opera traveled to Germany, Franco received rave reviews for his appearance in Madama Butterfly in the role of Lt. Pinkerton. In the years that followed his departure from Lincoln Opera, Franco sang such roles as Rodolfo in Puccini's La Boheme and Mario Cavaradossi in the same composer's Tosca. Following additional studies at Oklahoma City University, Franco began his association with Lyric Opera of Chicago, taking his solo bow as the Messenger in Lyric's 1993 production of Verdi's Aida. In 1997, Franco was invited to sing at the Opera Theatre of Humberg, Bavaria, where he reprised two of his favorite roles, Alfredo in La Traviata and Turiddu in Cavalleria Rusticana.

In addition to his busy stage career, this golden voiced tenor has sung with the Evanston Symphony Orchestra and has enjoyed appearing as both a musical artist and a panel guest on numerous radio and television programs in the Chicago area. In July of 2003, Franco studied in Poggio Renatico with the well-known opera coach, Ubaldo Gardini, who said that Franco's interpretations of Tosti's songs were second only to Bergonzi's. Franco sang in concert at The Beverly Arts Center with The Other Three Tenors in December of 2005. On March 5, 2006 Franco sang in concert in Oak Park in the Village Players Theater's "Night at the Opera". In May 2006 Franco performed the role of Alfredo in La Traviata with soprano, Christine Steyer at the same theater. In July he performed during Chicago's Venetian Night as well as the Milwaukee Italian Fest. Currently Mr. Martorana is preparing to perform the role of Pinkerton in Puccini's Madama Butterfly for Bellissima Productions at the Village Players Theater in Oak Park in 2007.

*"Franco is one of few tenors in the world who can interpret the songs of Francesco Paolo Tosti and Neapolitan songs well. He could make his living just singing these."*

Ubaldo Gardini

# Opera Repertoire

Cavalleria Rusticana	Turiddu Mascagni	Theaterhof, Humbach, Germany	1997
La Traviata	Alfredo Verdi	Theaterhof, Humbach, Germany	1997
La Traviata	Alfredo Verdi	Opera Oklahoma	1991
Die Fledermaus	Alfred Strauss	Opera Oklahoma	1991
La Boheme	Rodolfo Puccini	Opera Oklahoma	1990
Cavalleria Rusticana	Turiddu Mascagni	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1989
La Boheme	Rodolfo Puccini	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1989
Tosca	Cavaradossi Puccini	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1988
Madama Butterfly	Pinkerton Puccini	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1988
Die Fledermaus	Alfred Strauss	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1987
La Traviata	Alfredo Verdi	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1986
Merry Widow	Camille Lehar	Lincoln Opera, Chicago	1985

## RECITAL / ORATORIO / ORCHESTRA

Franco and Friends Summer Song Fest	2006
Italian Fest in Milwaukee, WI	2006
Beloit College The Three Tenors Plus One Concert in Beloit WI	2005
Beverly Arts Center The Other Three Tenors Concert	2005
Italian Festival in Chicago, IL	2005
Belcanto Foundation 30th Anniversary Gala, Chicago, IL	2004
Italian Festival Opera Gala, Stone Park, IL	2003

# *Opera Repertoire*

Benefit for North Korea Refugees, Chicago, IL 2003

Benefit for Victims of Turkey Earthquake, Chicago, IL 2001

## EDUCATION / OTHER TRAINING PROGRAM

Opera Master Class with Inci Bashar, Chicago, IL 2005

Opera Summer Work Shop under Ubaldo Gardini, Poggio Renatico, Italy 2003

University of Oklahoma-B.M 1991

Opera Summer Work Shop under John Wustman, Oklahoma, OK 1990

Opera Master Class under Arrigo Pola, Chicago, IL 1987

## TEACHER / COACHES / CONDUCTORS / DIRECTORS

Connie Haas Inci Bashar, Bruno Bartoletti, Greta Benini, Ubaldo Gardini, Paul Kisgen, Carlos Montane,

Arrigo Pola, Lynn Schornick, Ken Smith, Norma Williams, Michael J. Wilson.