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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**OPERA NEW JERSEY RECEIVES NEARLY \$800,000 BEQUEST FROM VICTORIA J. MASTROBUONO**

**New Jersey's largest opera company will rename its Young Artist program the Victoria J. Mastrobuono Emerging Artist Program in honor of its benefactor.**

**June 1, 2010, PRINCETON, NJ** – Opera New Jersey is pleased to announce that it has been awarded close to \$800,000 from the estate of Victoria J. Mastrobuono. The funds will be used for general operating expenses and to support activities surrounding its acclaimed young artist program, now to be known as the Victoria J. Mastrobuono Emerging Artist Program.

Ms. Mastrobuono was a long-time patron of Opera New Jersey with a significant history of both identifying and supporting emerging artists. After hearing a young Michael Fabiano, then a student at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, she was instrumental to securing and underwriting his appearance in OperaNJ's 2008 performance of *La traviata*. From The Met to the English National Opera, Mr. Fabiano is now one of the most sought-after young American tenors.

"We are honored by Ms. Mastrobuono's generous bequest and feel that it acknowledges our extraordinary growth over the past few years," said Richard Russell, OperaNJ's General Director. "As the largest single gift in our company's history, we feel that it is only fitting that we recognize it by renaming our commitment to young singers, which is such an important part of our mission, in her honor."

Opera New Jersey, well-known for its mission to promote emerging talent, provides multiple concert opportunities for young singers during its year-round program while focusing on even more intense activities in the winter and summer. During the Winter Season, toured throughout New Jersey, emerging artists perform in the chorus, perform supporting roles, and understudy leading roles next to international-level talent. The Summer Season of three main-stage productions offers even greater performing opportunities. In addition to the activities offered in the winter season, summer emerging artists perform in several productions presented specifically for them, such as

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two Scenes and Arias programs, three outdoor concerts that focus primarily on musical theatre, a reading of a new operatic work, all while receiving individual coachings and participating in Masterclasses. The summer culminates with an “Audition Day” during which the emerging artists sing for a collection of Artists’ managers and impresarios; every year several young singers have received contracts and management through this unique opportunity.

Following the critically-acclaimed, record-breaking Winter Season performances of *Carmen*, OperaNJ will present the 2010 Summer Season featuring productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Faust*, and *Don Pasquale* all to be held within the Emmy award-winning McCarter Theatre Complex in Princeton, NJ. For tickets: 609.258.2787 or [www.mccarter.org](http://www.mccarter.org).

### **About Opera New Jersey**

Opera New Jersey is recognized nationally as a leader among regional opera companies, providing high quality opera performances and exceptional educational offerings. Opera New Jersey seeks to stimulate, promote and satisfy interest in opera, build a strong and diverse audience base for the art form and foster the development of emerging artists. Opera New Jersey has received three prestigious Citations of Excellence from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA). Opera New Jersey is honored to be the recipient of several National Endowment for the Arts grants in recognition of outstanding programming. For more information: [www.Opera-NJ.org](http://www.Opera-NJ.org).

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