

# Opera Santa Barbara A Night at the Opera Santa Barbara

By **Jacqueline Dyson** / Special to CASA

**A GRAND AND GALA EVENING** marked Opening Night of Opera Santa Barbara's 2009 Festival at The Granada featuring Georges Bizet's "Carmen" in all its glory.

The romance and passion of the opera seemed to burst onto the street scene as guests arrived, complete with Klieg lights and classic cars setting the stage for the gala occasion.

Opera patrons arrived in furs, jewels, long gowns and black-tie for a full evening of celebration. In a nod to the Spanish

theme of the opera and the historic Granada Theatre, two Spanish "Toreadors" greeted arrivals at the door, while in the lobby dance students from Rosemary Cruz Dance & Entertainment offered souvenir (chocolate) cigars to the gentlemen and souvenir (chocolate) long-



**Sarah Miller McCune**

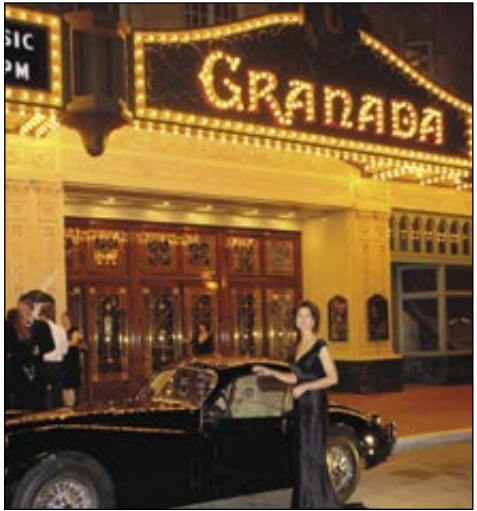
stemmed red roses to the ladies.

As champagne popped, and conversation bubbled in the opulent surroundings of the newly restored theatre, Chris Judge strummed Andalusian tunes on his guitar.

Opera lovers from near and far came to town to witness history at The Granada that night, and thrilled at the huge success of this production.

The sold out audience cheered the Santa Barbara Symphony conducted by Nir Kabaretti; the superb cast of vocal artists; and the flamenco dancers Arleen Hurtado and Santa Barbara native Pablo Pizano, who doubled as choreographer.

Performance highlights included local members of the Chorus from the Young Artists Program; and a role reversal walk-on of the Dignitaries by Dr. Joe Bum, who played the village mayor, and Santa



**Susan Van Abel** next to a Jaguar XK 150 (black c. 1957)



**Caryl Beadel and Michael Wray**



**June and Ray Aromatorio**

Barbara Mayor Marty Blum as his wife.

The theatre itself was a star of the first magnitude as it offered up a tour de force presentation of its magnificent stage; exceptional acoustics & lighting; state of the art technical equipment and amenities for artists and guests alike.

The community has embraced The Granada and welcomed Opera Santa Barbara to its new home. *Viva Carmen!*

Don't miss Opera SB's last show of *The Merry Widow* on Sunday, March 22nd at 2:30pm at La Granada. For more information call 899-2222 or visit [www.operasb.com](http://www.operasb.com).



**Richard Scholl, Ann Marquis, Matthew Marquis, and Don Bobbs**



Sheriff **Bill Brown** with Rosemary Cruz Dancers (left to right) **Jasmine Lopez; Alexandra Feres; Shaena Keefer; Lauren Hovey; and Lizett Velasquez**



**Brian Smith; Jaclyn Pizano Smith, Sonia Pizano-Bellotti, Vibiana Pizano Smith, Pizano, Philip Bellotti, Lillian Pizano, and Al Pizano**



**Bobbee and Paul Welterlen**

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