



Board of Supervisors Memorandum

April 5, 2022

Teatro Carmen Stage Naming Opportunity

Background

Stratford Art Works, Inc. (SAW), through Joint Development Agreement No. CT-FM-22*149, is the subject matter expert and advisor to Pima County on the renovation and restoration of the recently acquired historic Teatro Carmen/Black Elks Club established in 1915 in the Barrio Viejo Neighborhood. SAW is also responsible for the fundraising of this project and is developing a marketing concept and campaign with the target goal of raising \$3 million. As the kick-off element for its private fundraising efforts, SAW seeks approval to name the stage within Teatro Carmen the "Ronstadt Family Stage" to acknowledge and celebrate the unique history of the Ronstadt Family in Southern Arizona.

Federico José María Ronstadt (Fred Ronstadt) reportedly arrived to Tucson with his father in 1882. Fred Ronstadt was a pioneer Tucson businessman and former Pima County Board of Supervisors member (1902) who was also known for his musical interests since the late 1800s and for many years thereafter before his death in 1954. His musical interests included playing instruments and singing in the Club Filarmónico de Tucson, one of Tucson's earliest orchestral groups; Saturday Morning Musical Club; the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, of which he was also among the organizers; and the original Railroad band. According to a December 14, 1954 front-page article of the then-Tucson Daily Citizen, "During the Spanish-American War, he and his band joined the National Guard and became the regimental band for the state." The Ronstadt children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren have also performed and were involved in various public and private musical venues over the decades with Mr. Ronstadt's daughter, Luisa Espinel (Ronstadt), and his granddaughter, Linda Ronstadt, achieving local, national and international recognition as a song interpreter and singer respectively.

Naming the Teatro Carmen the "Ronstadt Family Stage" recognizes the Family's 140-year legacy, history and musical contributions to Tucson as well as national and international venues. Approval of naming this theater stage the "Ronstadt Family Stage" would serve as the centerpiece and kick-off for the overall development of fundraising plans and efforts for this renovation project. The estimated cost for stage rehabilitation and its related technologies is \$500,000. SAW has secured the "blessing" of this initial marketing and stage-naming concept from Linda Ronstadt and an initial donation. SAW plans to market the stage element as part of its fundraising campaign and is developing a comprehensive program that will outline additional facility elements and future naming opportunities for County approval at a later date.

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

Re: **Teatro Carmen Stage Naming Opportunity**

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Attached is the request from Stratford Art Works, Inc. as well as additional background information. In an effort to develop a formal fundraising work plan and activities in accordance with Board of Supervisors Policy C 3.19 and Administrative Procedure 3-24, the contractor has requested County support in naming the stage within the Teatro Carmen.

Historic restoration and preservation of Southwestern architecture and culture creates more opportunity for community building and sharing of local culture and history as well as influence economic impact from increased tourism and community engagement.

Recommendation

I recommend the Board approves the naming of the Teatro Carmen stage the "Ronstadt Family Stage." Stratford Art Works, Inc. will use this naming opportunity to develop a formal fundraising work plan and future naming activities for consideration at a future Board of Supervisors meeting.

Sincerely,



Jan Leshner
Acting County Administrator

JKL/mp – March 18, 2022

Attachment

c: Mark Napier, Assistant County Administrator
 Lisa Josker, Director, Facilities Management
 Diane Frisch, Director, Attractions and Tourism
 Linda Mayro, Director, Office of Sustainability and Conservation

To: Lisa Josker, Director, Pima County Facilities Management
From: Herb Stratford, President, Stratford Art Works, Inc.
Date: 3/7/2022

Subject: Teatro Carmen "Ronstadt Family Stage" Naming Opportunity

As you are aware, Stratford Art Works, Inc. is responsible for the fundraising for renovation and restoration of the historic Teatro Carmen/Black Elks Club, recently acquired by Pima County. As part of that overall effort, we have identified an initial marketing concept which we believe will act as a perfect kick-off for our private fundraising efforts. We want to make sure the County is on the same page for this concept.

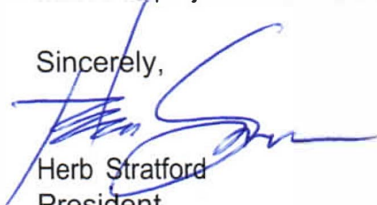
The stage at the theatre represents the heart of this project and provides a perfect centerpiece to begin our fundraising campaign. The original stage and fly loft were demolished decades ago, but the original proscenium arch remains. Current plans call for a state-of-the-art new stage and technical booth which will include modern lighting and sound systems, projection and stage curtains, among other improvements.

Stratford Art Works, Inc., would like Pima County Facilities Management to consider naming the "Ronstadt Family Stage" to celebrate and acknowledge the unique history of the Ronstadt family in Southern Arizona and the multi-generational, multi-genre musical legacy of the Ronstadt's have left on Tucson (see attached marketing material).

As of today, we have been able to secure the "blessing" of this concept from Linda Ronstadt, and her initial donation. We are excited to begin our fundraising campaign with this element as the centerpiece, and are working on our comprehensive list of other naming opportunities within the project.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with the County on this incredible project. Please let me know if you have any questions,

Sincerely,



Herb Stratford
President
Stratford Art Works, Inc.

• TEATRO • CARMEN

EST. 1915



THE RONSTADT FAMILY STAGE AT THE HISTORIC TEATRO CARMEN

Ronstadt Brothers Band - 2016

One of the earliest and most iconic locations for live music and entertainment in Tucson, Arizona is the Teatro Carmen in Barrio Viejo. Built in 1915, the theatre was the largest and most luxurious when commissioned by Carmen Soto Vasquez. It hosted touring theatre, music and other important cultural events on its modest stage, and from 1915 – 1922 it was the heart of the community's artistic soul.

The venue went on to showcase early silent cinema screenings, boxing and wrestling matches, and other events prior to becoming an African-American Social club. And now, the building is poised to return to life as a 250-seat cultural and entertainment destination.

Once again, the stage at the Teatro Carmen will play host to a wide variety of entertainment including music, dance, theatre, spoken word and, cinema events. The heart of the reborn Teatro Carmen is her

stage. The original stage and fly loft were demolished decades ago, but the original proscenium arch remains and plans call for a state-of-the-art new stage and technical booth. This project will see new lights, sound system, projection and custom stage curtains to highlight Carmen's unique place in the community. A merging of her history and her future, a place where everyone can come experience the arts .



William, Fred and Edward Ronstadt - 1954

TEATRO CARMEN

EST. 1915

Stratford Art Works, a 25-year-old Arizona non-profit arts organization, and Pima County are currently rehabilitating the theatre, and want to celebrate and acknowledge the unique history of the Ronstadt family in Southern Arizona. The multi-generational, multi-genre musical legacy of the Ronstadt's has left an indelible mark on Tucson, and in honor of that history we are working to name the new stage after the Ronstadt family. Elements of the project will include:

- New fly loft and stage
- Motorized stage rigging system
- Custom Stage drapes
- Lighting
- Sound system

The overall cost for this aspect of the Theatre's rehabilitation is \$500,000, and will be the center of the performing arts aspect of the project. A new technical booth, cinema projection set up and dressing areas and a green room will also be part of the project but are not part of this specific endeavor.

We are inviting contributions to the Ronstadt Family Stage Fund which will be dedicated to completing this project. Donors will be recognized on a specific plaque in the theatre once it reopens. Contributions from \$500 - \$100,000 are being sought, multi-year pledges are welcome. It is anticipated the theatre will reopen in 2025 for her 110th anniversary.



From top:
Luisa Espinel (Ronstadt) - 1924
Fred Ronstadt and Luisa Espinel - 1954
Linda Ronstadt
Left: Fred Ronstadt & Club Filarmonico de Tucson - 1896

