

Former N. O. Musician In Free Concert Nov. 24

BY CARON CONWAY

For singer-guitarist Marcelo Antonio, music is something that comes from within but is meant to be shared with others.

THE FORMER New Orleans musician hopes to share his talent in a very different way, as part of the rebuilding effort in New Orleans, a place where he's lived on and off since childhood.

Along with friends in the music industry, Antonio is working on a plan to construct a film-and-editing studio in the Crescent City, a longtime favorite of film crews whose cinematic appeal remains despite Katrina. In concert with the state-of-the-art facility, Antonio wants to help young musicians there form a film orchestra that would be used in American movie projects that currently turn to orchestras in London and Prague.

As a "24/7 musician," Antonio knows full well that the music business can be a tough one. "I think the bottom line for survival is if your art can somehow be of service to somebody," he said.

TOWARD this end, he's taught in music schools in Louisiana and California, and currently is writing the vocal curriculum for another in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Antonio, of Creole heritage, characterizes his style of music as "tropidelic" – a Caribbean-based and Afro-centric "rhythmic celebration" that's also "filled with the New Orleans take."

The son of a "show biz woman" who sang and danced as a Rockette, Antonio has been singing and playing one instrument or another pretty much his entire life. His big break came in the 1980s when he was signed with MCA Records. Shortly thereafter

came the big "corporate shakeup."

"One minute I was a kid recording next-door to Pat Benatar. And the next morning I get the phone call," Antonio recalled. "Three-hundred people were fired, and I was one of them."

During his long career, he's worked with the likes of Al Jarreau, Van Morrison, Boz Skaggs, Vic Damone and other industry notables. And he's also performed and been part of the scoring team on a handful of movie soundtracks.

ANTONIO, who now calls Sunny Isles Beach home, can be seen performing at clubs and music festivals throughout South Florida, where his ties date back to Miami Central High School. At the time Katrina struck, he, his schoolteacher wife and their two children were staying in Hollywood while Antonio helped out his parents and pursued TV commercial work.

While Katrina took all the "stuff of life" he had stored in New Orleans, "The loss that I experienced was nothing compared to the loss that most people experienced," Antonio said.

He's been back a few times to help repair friends' houses in the notorious party town that today still has areas without electricity and running water. What Antonio misses most is the unwavering support for music. "In New Orleans, we learned that we're all in this together," he said. "It was one celebration of music, and life, after another."

Marcelo Antonio and his band will perform at Broadwalk Friday Fest, 7 to 10 p.m. Nov. 24 at the Hollywood Beach Theater at Johnson Street. The free concert is presented by the Beach District of the Hollywood Community Redevelopment Agency.



*Singer-Guitarist
Marcelo Antonio*



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