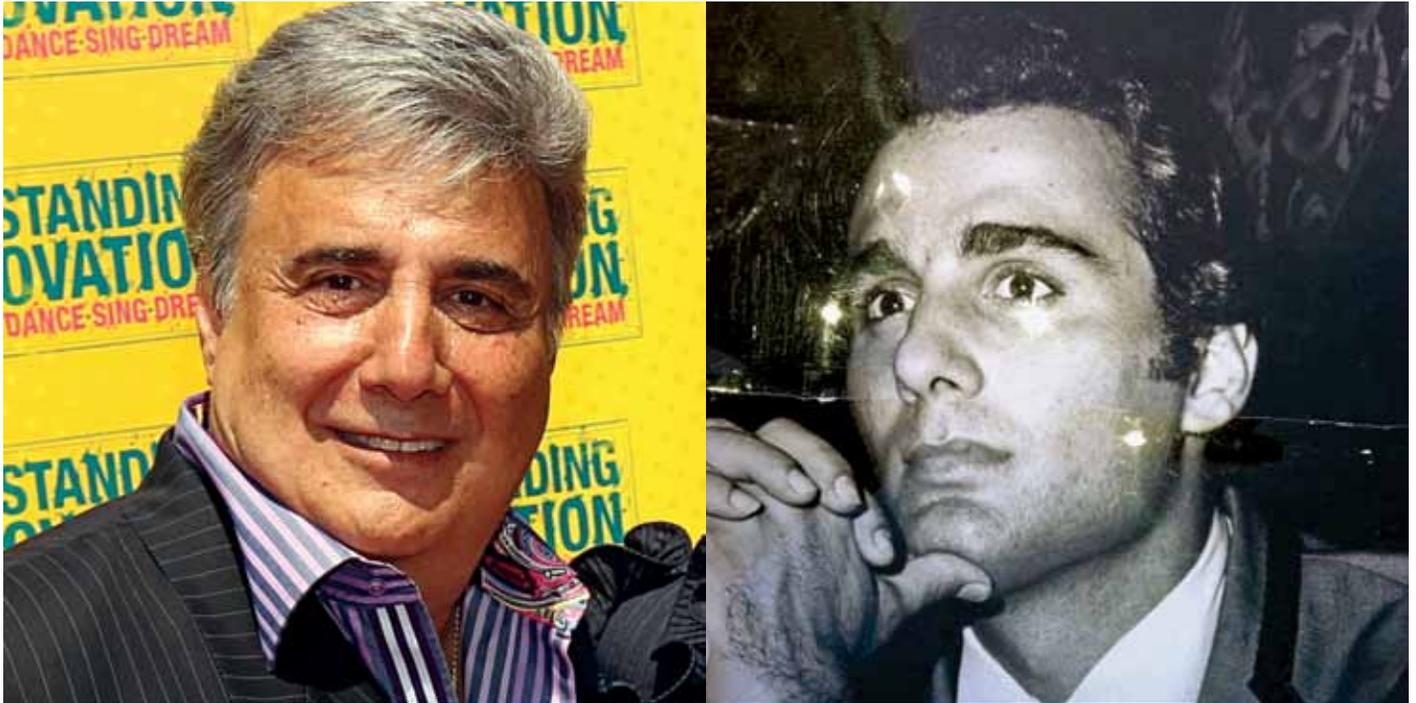


SAL DUPREE



RISING ABOVE

by BOB
WAGNER

It has been said, “true art comes through sadness and tragedy.” I’ve always felt a more apropos statement would be, “true art comes from rising above sadness and tragedy.” This would certainly be true in the case of Sal Dupree.

Sal Dupree is a nationally known veteran performer, vocal and acting coach as well as producer. For 22 consecutive years, Dupree was a favorite at Bally’s Park Place, Taj Mahal, Golden Nugget and the Tropicana Hotel and Casino, where he holds the record for the longest-running act in Atlantic City history.

In 1975, he founded the Dupree Performing Arts Studios which has become the largest private performing arts school in New Jersey. However, his students span the globe from Los Angeles to Europe.

He has provided talent for major Broadway shows including Annie, The Sound of Music, Peter Pan, Tony and Tina’s Wedding, Sunday in the

Park with George, Les Miserables and Beauty and the Beast. Most recently, he was the Music Supervisor, Producer and featured actor/singer in the movie musical Standing Ovation.

While Dupree has performed all over the world and his students or his “kids” as he calls them, span the globe, his story really begins right here in South Philadelphia.

Dupree was born Sal Amorello in Brooklyn, New York. Shortly after his birth, his father left the family and his struggling mother relocated the family to Philadelphia. They settled at 9th & Shunk Streets. Times were tough and in 1951, the strain of single motherhood became too much for her. She placed Sal and his sister in the Down-

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town Jewish Orphans Home, later known as the Greenwich Home, hoping they could provide a better life for her children.

From 1951 – 1961, this was the only home Dupree knew. He attended Fell School, Furness Junior High and Boone High School, trying his best to bond with "regular" neighborhood kids. Dupree said he grew up with a chip on his shoulder. A father who abandoned him, a mother who did the best she could but could not cope and children who teased him for being an orphan. He said there were many nights he would have gone to bed hungry if it weren't for the kindness of a woman named Mrs. Neiman, who snuck into his room at the home late at night to give him two bagels with cream cheese.

While at the Downtown Home, Dupree not only discovered the inherent good that lies in some people but also his gift – a golden voice. While trying out for the choir to sing at the annual fundraiser, young Sal so impressed the staff that he was chosen to sing Eddie Fisher's, "Oh My Papa." He brought the house to tears. He raised so much money, the staff made him sing the song for 10 straight years.

Dupree left the Downtown Home in 1961 at the age of 17. For a while, he did odd jobs to survive and slept in a pool room. One day, while sitting on a bench at Broad Street & Snyder Avenue, stuffing cardboard into the soles of his shoes, he was recognized by Billy Carlucci - lead singer of popular Doo-Wop group "Billy & the Essentials" - who heard Dupree sing with a number of Doo-Wop groups in the area. Billy took Sal home for a hot meal and Mrs. Carlucci not only fed him, she insisted he move in until he got back on his feet. Once again, the gentle hand of kindness touched Sal Dupree. Mrs. Carlucci also arranged an audition for Sal, which led to gigs in Las Vegas. A life-long career in music was launched.

Dupree says he tells his students, "If you have any talent, that is God's gift to you. If you use that talent, that is your gift to God."

Sal, we thank you for sharing your knowledge, talent and passion for music with us all. You have undoubtedly made your students not only better singers, but, more importantly, better people.

The Dupree Performing Arts Studios are located at 199 New Road in Lindwood, New Jersey 08221 ■



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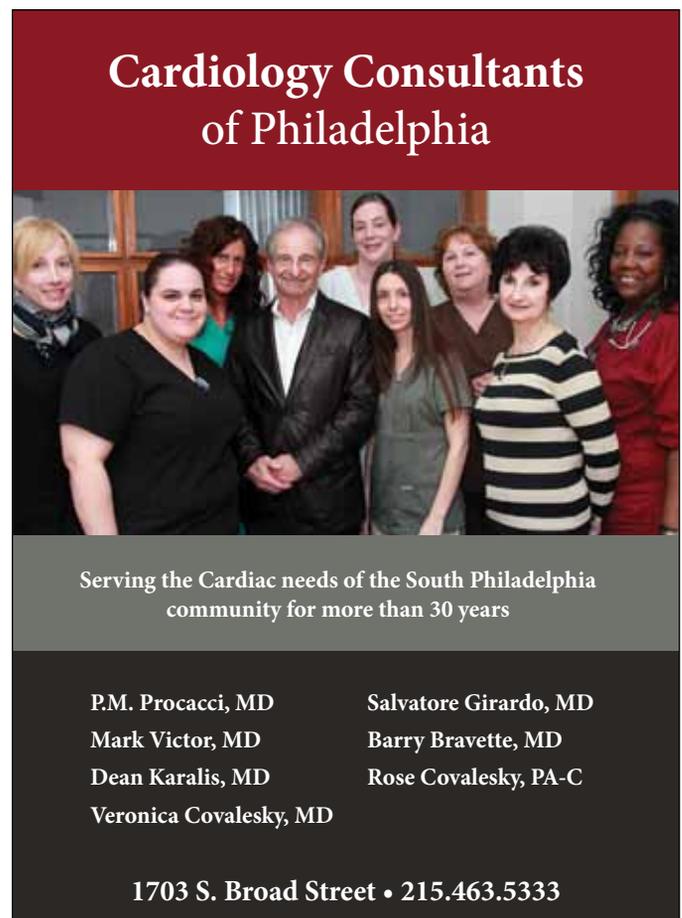
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