



## Q & A Charmaine Warmenhoven



**MEET CHARMAINE WARMENHOVEN**, a Silicon Valley philanthropist representing our community of individual givers. Ms. Warmenhoven is very active in the community and has personally contributed millions of dollars to nonprofit organizations throughout Silicon Valley. In addition, she is a board member of the Catholic Foundation of Santa Clara County; a member of the board of trustees of Santa Clara University; a

member of the advisory board of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at SCU; board member and past president of the board of Montalvo Arts Center; and a board member of Americans for the Arts, based in NYC and Washington DC. Ms. Warmenhoven and her husband Dan, executive chairman of NetApp, were presented as laureates at the Junior Achievement Hall of Fame on March 30, 2004.

**Q: In which Silicon Valley arts and culture organizations have you personally invested?**

A: Over the years, Dan and I have invested in Montalvo Art Center, Ballet San Jose, and Zer01. We have also supported an art and technology exhibit at the Tech Museum. We have been subscribers to Symphony San Jose and the San Jose Rep.

**Q: What makes arts and culture an important investment?**

A: Good question. We know that children who are exposed to art and music perform better academically in school. But that's not all, or even most important. What will become of even greater value in the future are people who can think creatively, see connections between disparate elements, envision what might be. The arts, as a whole, are uniquely able to provide this education. While I applaud efforts to increase reading and math skills in our children, we cannot underestimate the need for creativity, to use those rote skills as tools to create a better future.

**Q: What aspects of arts, culture and entertainment inspire you?**

A: In my travels around the globe, one of the most interesting and exciting experiences I have is when I am able to see art being used as the catalyst for conversation and for understanding between vastly different cultures or vastly different histories. These dialogues — using a painting, a sculpture, a video, music or dance as the medium — are so rich in fostering understanding of different perspectives, in exchanging ideas, and in finding commonality in our humanity across what may have been seen before as a chasm.

**Q: Why do you think the majority of philanthropy leaves the region?**

A: I think many people are like Dan and me; we came to Silicon Valley 25 years ago from the east coast. We still have ties with and support organizations there as well. Perhaps there is not such a long and generational tradition here as in other parts of the country for philanthropic support of regional organizations. And perhaps the expression of need for support of local organizations could be better articulated.

**Q: As the former chair of Villa Montalvo, what will it take to attract individual philanthropic support to arts and culture in Silicon Valley?**

A: I think first and foremost, individuals need to see the value of arts and culture to their community and to their lives. If one day we woke up and didn't have dance, or music, or performing arts, readily accessible, we would certainly better appreciate their value then. Secondly, I think individual supporters of the arts know and appreciate a good product. We have some outstanding product here in the bay area, very diverse, and very reflective of our multi-cultural face. We need to promote them better. Third, I think in this economy we need to focus on those safety-net organizations that keep our communities afloat. But those who are able to, in addition, must heed the call to keep our arts and culture organizations afloat as well.