

'The Last Massacre' offers historic lure, local flavor

CABLE CONNECTION



MARY LINDA CALDERONE
Philip Singer, community access producer and Oakland Universi-

INFO TV-12 viewers shouldn't miss "63 Tonnaroti, 22 Giorni — L'Ultima Tonnara Mattanza." That's Italian for "63 Fishermen, 22 Days — The Last Massacre!" — a documentary produced by Dr.

ty Professor of Health Behavior Sciences and Anthropology. Dr. Singer was in good company on the island of Favignana off Sicily as he recorded historic moments side-by-side with the National Geographic, The Discovery Channel, Italian TV and Japanese TV. They videotaped a technique for capturing the giant blue fin tuna that goes back at least 2,000 years. When Dr. Singer videotaped the process in 1996 this was the last time it would take place. The traditional method has

given way to giant factory ships from Japan and other countries utilizing modern technology to catch the blue fin tuna. Dr. Singer tried to show the dramatic final hooking of the fish in the "chamber of death" from an anthropological viewpoint. He also focused on capturing the intense and meticulous daily preparation by the fishermen. The National Geographic, Discovery Channel, Italian and Japanese TV were concerned only with the final 24 minutes of the catch. During the 22 days of

preparation described in this nine part series, Dr. Singer shot 40 hours of video alone! All the other channels had crews ranging from 4 to 8 people. With the help of production specialist Todd Whitman, this has been edited down to 7 hours and 16 minutes which will run on INFO TV-12 in nine parts. And it's just our luck Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi and SWOCC Cable Commission member is an Italian-American who speaks the language fluently. He agreed to do all the trans-

lation for the program.

Mayor Vagnozzi served as an Italian Interpreter during World War II with prisoners of war. "Being involved in the project was a little bit of déjà vu for me," Vagnozzi said. "I was born in a fishing village called Roseto, in the Abruzzi area of southern mainland Italy. When I see the fishermen in the video, it reminds me of my days as a child watching the fishermen go out in the morning."

The Regional Cultural Center of Italy has acquired the docu-

mentary for its library in Palermo. The documentary was donated to them by Dr. Singer. Check your TV listings for days and times.

This is a story that appeals to all. Whether you're Italian-American, a traveler, a fisherman or just plain believe in the nobility of work, you'll enjoy watching this fine documentary.

Mary Linda Calderone is the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission.

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