



Giving the arts a hand

DONORS' CIRCULAR

From coast to coast: NAC English Theatre's role on the Canadian theatre scene

INSIDE

- Message from the CEO | 2
- Donor Profile: Hala Tabl | 3
- French Theatre | 4
- Staff Listing | 5
- Making Giving Easier | 5
- Stewardship Report | 6
- Calendar of Events | 8

Photo: Fred Cattroll

At Canada's National Arts Centre, the support of our Donors' Circle helps extend the reach of our English Theatre department far beyond our Main Stage, Studio, and Family Theatre series. Led by Marti Maraden, one of Canada's foremost stage directors, NAC English Theatre takes a leadership role on the national stage by acting as a catalyst to foster excellence in Canadian drama, working in partnership with theatres and artists from all regions. These national partnerships primarily take the form of collaboration on new play development and the staging of co-productions.

In the theatre world, a play is called a "co-production" when two or more theatre companies, usually in different cities, partner with each other to plan, create, and stage a production to be seen by audiences in more than one community. Artistic and financial decisions are shared, as well as costs, in a type of joint venture that allows companies to pool talent and resources.



NAC donor and patron Margaret Torrance was greeted by Peter Herrndorf, (President and CEO, National Arts Centre) and Jayne Watson (Director of Communications) at the NAC pre-show reception for *Copenhagen* in Toronto this past January.

Co-producing plays is an important strategy for Canadian theatre companies since it often allows for productions to be staged with larger casts, higher production costs or other elements of financial risk. If it weren't for these collaborations, many shows could not otherwise be staged. This is why the NAC's commitment to co-production partnerships is so

important and is of great benefit to audiences and theatres in all parts of the country.

For the 2003-2004 theatre season, nine plays co-produced by the NAC will be staged in six different cities, from coast to coast – from Vancouver to Wolfville. This season in Toronto for example, five NAC co-productions

Aussi disponible en français

cont'd on page 7



Message

Message from the NAC Foundation CEO

One of my most pleasurable tasks is reporting to the NAC Donors' Circle about the enormous impact that your gifts have had on artistic excellence in Canada. This "stewardship" issue of the Donors' Circular gives you, our donors, a chance to see the difference that your support makes to programming at the NAC and to its broader mission of supporting the performing arts across the country.

Taking time to celebrate the successes that donor support brings is an important exercise. It takes us beyond the dollars and cents, allowing us to see the many creative initiatives that move the NAC from the ordinary to the extraordinary. Take a look at what "artistic expansion and innovation" mean at the NAC, thanks to your gifts.

- NACO, "Canada's orchestra" toured Atlantic Canada in November 2002, visiting eight cities, performing seven concerts and holding 60 education sessions.
- In May 2003, more than 400 artists from Atlantic Canada were showcased on Canada's stage, receiving career-boosting national exposure through *Atlantic Scene*.

Photo: Fred Cattroll



Photo: Fred Cattroll



- June saw nine playwrights attend the *On the Verge* festival of new play readings while 13 theatrical directors from across Canada attended *Les Laboratoires du Théâtre français*.
- In July, an unprecedented 35 students participated in our Young Artists Programme and three young composers attended the NAC's first Young Composers Programme.
- The NAC unveiled its newly-renovated Theatre in September 2003, the first renovation in its history.
- In November 2003, NACO toured the United States and Mexico, performing 10 concerts in 10 cities and holding 73 education sessions.
- The Youth Commission for Dance project premiered *Break Open Play* to enthusiastic audiences in November.
- During 2002-2003, our Hexagon broadband education project held 20 education events.

Taking pride in these accomplishments prepares us for the next set of challenges – our work as fundraisers and philanthropists is never done! Many exciting projects are waiting in the wings and need your support. This summer, even more young musicians will apply to our acclaimed summer training programme and we'll launch our new *Summer at the Centre* to delight audiences with outstanding performances. In November, NACO will tour British Columbia, bringing world class talent to communities across the province. At the same time, local artists will be showcasing their talents on our Fourth Stage. And, we're busy preparing for our next national cultural festival, *Alberta Scene*, in 2005.

Your continued support is the cornerstone of these activities. I encourage you to take time to reflect with pride on your contribution to these past achievements. Then, please take another moment to dream about what your next gift can do. Thank you again!

Darrell L. Gregersen
Executive Director of Development,
CEO, National Arts Centre Foundation

◁ Boris Brott (below) and members of the National Arts Centre Orchestra working with students on the 2003 US and Mexico Tour.

Photo: Mike Pinder

Donor Profile: Hala Tabl

Getting to know the people who love and support the National Arts Centre is one of the best things about working here – and we've met some amazing individuals over the years. With that in mind, each edition of the Donors' Circular will now feature an interview with one of your fellow Donors' Circle donors. Don't be surprised if we knock on your door in the near future!

Hala Tabl has been an ardent supporter of the NAC for years, both contributing to the Annual Fund campaign and regularly attending our signature galas. The performing arts are a welcome respite for her, as she works countless hours in the telecommunications sector of the I.T. industry.

Q Which is your favourite of the NAC's four stages and why?

A Southam Hall – mainly because this is where I attend most of the concerts and operas.

Q Besides the NAC, what other organizations do you support, and why?

A I support Opera Lyra Ottawa, the National Gallery and the Humane Society through charitable donations. I also volunteer for Opera Lyra and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). My support for arts organizations stems from



Hala Tabl has been an ardent supporter of the NAC for years.

a deep-rooted love – from years of being dragged, as a child, to operas, concerts and museums – and a belief in encouraging young people to enjoy, perform and be creative in these areas. As for my support for the Humane Society – well, I guess, too many kittens in my life.

Q What was the best gift you ever received? And/or what was the most meaningful gift you ever gave?

A The best gift I ever received was a medal and certificate from IEEE in recognition of my volunteering efforts during the millennium celebrations. On the other hand, I think the most meaningful gift I ever gave was

when I volunteered to read English novels that were part of the school curriculum, for the blind, back home.

Q Please describe the most memorable performance you have attended at the NAC.

A This is a very hard one as there are quite a few of them! I guess I'll describe a more recent one. This was a recital by Dmitri Hvorostovsky – the singing was so beautiful! To the point I found myself crying even though I don't understand a word of Russian. Yet I could feel the strong emotion reverberating through his voice!

The National Arts Centre's *French Theatre*

Since its creation thirty-five years ago, the National Arts Centre's French Theatre has maintained a high standard of quality drama, thanks to its very impressive line of artistic directors: Jean-Guy Sabourin, Jean Herbiet, André Brassard, Robert Lepage, artistic advisor Jean-Claude Marcus and, since December 2000, Denis Marleau.

Over the years, numerous large international calibre theatre productions have been produced here. French Theatre premiered two of Michel Tremblay's greatest pieces – *Bonjour là, bonjour* and *Albertine, en cinq temps* – and here, Jean Herbiet introduced his famous productions of Strindberg's *Le Songe* and Büchner's *Woyzeck* with the Félix Mirbt marionettes. It was also at the National Arts Centre that Robert Lepage created *Les Aiguilles et l'Opium*.

Through carefully chosen partnerships, Denis Marleau has increased the international impact of the French Theatre. His latest work, an adaptation of Chekhov's *Le Moine noir*, will premiere in March 2004 at the Manège.Mons drama centre in Belgium, and will play in Liège, Tournai and Reims before playing in Ottawa, Montréal and at an international festival. In addition, a European tour is already set for the

fall of 2004. Denis Marleau's previous productions at the National Arts Centre, Gaétan Soucy's *Catoblépas* and Samuel Beckett's *La Dernière Bande*, also had high-profile distribution in Europe.

Since the beginning of his mandate, Denis Marleau has ensured that French Theatre provides its patrons with world class presentations in tune with our times—theatre that draws on the strengths of art worldwide; theatre that develops and renews dramatic art. This concern is also expressed through paratheatrical initiatives such as publication of the *Cahiers du Théâtre français* and the creation of the *Laboratoires du*

Théâtre français. The National Arts Centre's French Theatre is a major centre for artistic creation, contributing to the appeal of the Ottawa-Gatineau region.

Theatre is art with living presence: flesh and blood actors present themselves before the audience; emotions are real, not illusory. Patrons who attend French Theatre productions are assured of seeing quality theatre and of participating in a deeply and genuinely human emotional and intellectual adventure.

Les Trois Soeurs
by Anton Chekhov
Directed by Wajdi Mouawad
Théâtre du Trident Production

Photo: Louise Leblanc



Making Giving Easier

A Bequest to the NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE Foundation

You've been thinking about the difference the National Arts Centre has made in the quality of your life. Perhaps you were in the audience nearly 35 years ago when the NAC first opened its doors. Perhaps you've brought your children to the Young People's Concerts, where their imaginations have been delighted. Or maybe you've made a point of coming to a few performances a year, and are grateful to know this cultural gem exists right in your backyard.

For all the reasons that the National Arts Centre is special to you now, imagine ensuring that this magic can continue in years to come. If you would like to make a gift with the NAC's future in mind, we invite you to consider leaving a bequest to the National Arts Centre Foundation. Your legacy gift can have extraordinary impact, while maximizing beneficial tax and estate planning considerations.

To learn more about making a bequest, setting up a trust or any other deferred gift arrangement, please contact our Planned Giving Office at (613) 947-7000, ext. 315. If you have already made provisions for a future contribution to the NAC Foundation, please let us know and you will be enrolled in our 'Emeritus Circle' today!

NAC Foundation

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Executive Director of Development
CEO, National Arts Centre Foundation

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The 2004 *Laboratoire du Théâtre français*

The constant search for authenticity underlying all theatre survives through the exchange of knowledge and experience among theatre artists. Such exchanges are often momentary, taking place in random encounters or during the play development process. However, they can also be encouraged through activities designed specifically for the purpose. That's why the **National Arts Centre (NAC) French Theatre** offers the **Laboratoire du Théâtre français** every year, a workshop in the "master class" model in which an internationally recognized theatre artist is invited to share his or her knowledge and practice with professional colleagues from our community.

Our first guest, in spring 2002, was translator André Markowicz who, with Denis Marleau, co-hosted a session on adapting the works of Dostoyevsky into French. The 2003 workshop featured American-born, French director Stuart Seide, whose practice emphasizes the physical and vocal foundations of performance, in an exploration of the work of the ancient Roman playwright Seneca.

The 2004 *Laboratoire* will be directed by playwright and director Wajdi Mouawad, a unique, powerful and original voice in contemporary Quebec theatre, whose vigorous and pertinent discourse and strikingly original artistic vision are evident both in his plays and in his staging. His subject for this third session of the *Laboratoires du Théâtre français* is *The Architecture and Geometry of Narrative*.

What Your Gifts Did – Stewardship Report for 2002-2003

Every year at the National Arts Centre, philanthropic giving and sponsorship make the difference between the ordinary and the extraordinary in everything we do, whether it be live performance, the creation of new works or arts education. In 2002-2003, your gifts to the National Arts Centre Foundation totalled \$3.75 million! Here are some highlights of the tremendous programming made possible by the generosity of our donors.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMING \$1,426,061

Thousands of individual gifts, foundation grants, sponsorships, and the proceeds of the NAC's annual Fall Gala – this powerful combination contributed to the almost \$1.5 million raised for youth and education. Many donors directed their gifts to “the area of greatest need” so \$734,122 of the total above was allocated to support general youth and education programming – young people's concerts, master classes, study guides and internships, for example.

Other donors have made gifts dedicated to specific youth and education projects. Here are just a few examples of the projects that were most important to many of our donors:

- participation by young artists, conductors and composers in our *Summer Music Institute* \$193,000
- subsidized tickets for students from lower income schools to attend performances \$37,006
- NACO's Apprentice Conductor position, ably filled by Jean-Philippe Tremblay \$10,000
- more than 60 educational events held as part of NACO's Atlantic Tour \$20,000
- stimulating student matinées in English Theatre \$25,066
- our Youth Commission for Dance, creating new dance works for young audiences \$19,510
- online arts education resources for children, parents and teachers at ArtsAlive.ca \$85,000

ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE IN ALL THE PERFORMING ARTS

Music \$1,014,583

Gifts to Music helped support the 115 performances by the NAC Orchestra in 2002-2003, including stellar appearances by guest artists such as Louis Lortie and Gil Shaham. Gifts were dedicated to specific projects as well:

- showcasing Canadian excellence on tour in the U.S. and Mexico
- recruiting, auditioning and training new musicians for the orchestra

English Theatre \$261,302

Shaw, Shakespeare and the award-winning international hit *Copenhagen* were highlights of the season. Donor support also made possible, among other things:

- new play development – commissions, workshops and *On the Verge* play-reading festival
- the inaugural *Magnetic North Theatre Festival*

French Theatre \$185,316

Le Festival du théâtre des régions in Ottawa in June 2003, and challenging new works such as *Quelqu'un va venir* demonstrated the power of donor support, as did these examples:

- *Les Laboratoires du Théâtre français*, one of Canada's finest artistic master classes
- ever-popular programming for young audiences, such as *Le Capitaine Horribifabulo*

Dance **\$204,533**

Donor support enabled us to present thrilling dance creations from Japan, France and Brazil as well as...

- large-scale classical productions such as *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*
- four North American and world premieres of exciting new dance works

Community Programming and the Fourth Stage **\$206,255**

Local performers used the NAC's state-of-the-art facility and expertise to present innovative entertainment in an intimate cabaret setting – story-telling, jazz, folk, poetry and song all thrived thanks to your gifts.

FESTIVALS AND OTHER PROJECTS **\$180,125**

Atlantic Scene, the NAC's first national festival celebrating the artistic culture of a particular region of Canada brought more than 400 Atlantic artists to the capital to showcase East Coast talent and delight audiences, and...

- thousands of Canadians were delighted by the NAC's Canada Day open house

CREATING A LEGACY **\$269,706**

Contributions in 2002-2003 to the NAC Foundation's three "named endowments" brought the total of these funds to almost half a million dollars, assets which will be used to support a variety of artistic endeavours in perpetuity.

cont'd from page 1

(*Copenhagen*, *Tiger of Malaya*, *Written on Water*, *Pélagie* and *Simpl*) will be performed before audiences in Canada's largest city, providing even greater exposure for the works, actors, playwrights and the National Arts Centre. Four of these co-productions are world premieres.

Recently (January 2 to February 22, 2004), the NAC-Neptune Theatre co-production of Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen*, was presented by Mirvish Productions as part of their 2003-04 season. Toronto audiences were delighted by the compelling direction of Diana Leblanc and inspiring performances of actors Michael Ball, Martha Henry and Jim Mezon, just as so many of our donors and patrons were last year during the play's Canadian premiere run in Ottawa and Halifax.

Having missed last year's production of *Copenhagen* on the NAC stage due to sabbatical travels, NAC supporter Margaret Torrance was determined to see the performance in Toronto. "*Copenhagen* evokes wonderful memories for me and my husband as we once lived in Scandinavia and our daughter was born

there... I feel most fortunate to have had the opportunity to enjoy the opening night of this wonderful play at Toronto's Winter Garden Theatre," recounts Margaret.

To celebrate *Copenhagen's* Toronto run and to showcase the National Arts Centre's impact on that city's cultural life, the National Arts Centre held a private pre-show reception for local and national media, politicians and Toronto theatre supporters. Following the show, Margaret and other guests of the National Arts Centre were welcomed by Mirvish Productions at their own opening night reception, which included genuine Danish *smorrebrod* and desserts.

By combining our budgets and creative talents and those of our partners across the country, National Arts Centre English Theatre co-productions continue to have a strong impact well beyond the limits of our own season and our own stages.

Have you ever wondered...?

Every day, our Donors' Circle office fields dozens of phone calls from our donors. We strive to provide the highest level of professionalism to fulfil your requests for information and services.

From time to time, donors come forward with questions about the National Arts Centre or the performing arts that we'd like to share with you.

Recently, donor Raymond Souw asked:

"Why does the orchestra warm up on stage in front of the audience?"

For the answer, we turned to Christopher Dearlove, NAC Orchestra Manager.

Chris tells us:

It's pretty common for North American orchestras to make the stage available to musicians at least one half hour before the concert begins. There are several reasons for this.

First of all, you can imagine the difficulty finding space backstage for 50 to 110 musicians to warm up and practice! Warming up is a key part of a musician's preparation for a concert, and in many concert halls, there simply isn't enough space for musicians to do so anywhere but on the stage itself.

Second, it gives the musicians a chance to adapt to the conditions around them. Even from one day to the next, there can be differences in temperature, humidity and drafts that can affect pitch and timbre.

What's more, the acoustics of the hall may also be different depending on the musician's location on stage. For example, sometimes our horn players are on stage left, and sometimes they are closer to centre stage. While warming up, musicians can listen to the hall and make the necessary adjustments so they're prepared to perform at the highest level when the conductor walks on stage to begin the concert.

I hope this sheds some light on the tradition!

Do you have a question that you've often pondered? E-mail, write, phone or drop by with your idea for our next column, and we'll try to find the answer. If your question is selected for a future issue of the Donors' Circular, you will receive a special NAC prize!

Donors' Circle office (613) 947-7000 ext. 315 or annualfund@nac-cna.ca

Calendar of Events

April 2004

TUESDAY APRIL 20

Emeritus Circle Tea

By invitation only
RSVP required

WEDNESDAY APRIL 21

Donor Orientation Tour

Meet outside the
Donors' Circle Office
at 6:30 PM
RSVP required

May 2004

THURSDAY MAY 27

NACO Open Rehearsal
Jack Everly –
Pops Goes British

Pre-Chat: 10:30 AM
Open Rehearsal:
11:00 AM
RSVP required

June 2004

WEDNESDAY JUNE 2

NAC 35th
Anniversary Celebrations

5:00 PM to 8:30 PM

SATURDAY JUNE 26

Summer Music Institute
Donor Reception

By invitation only
RSVP required

July 2004

THURSDAY JULY 22

"Meet the Artist" Extravaganza

- Please present your donor card at all Open Rehearsals and Previews.

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