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Le Canada en scène.

Fall • 2015

# Full Circle

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## Welcoming a new maestro to the podium: **Alexander Shelley begins his tenure as the NAC Orchestra's Music Director**

It's like visiting an old friend.

That's how Alexander Shelley, the NAC Orchestra's new Music Director, describes the joy we feel when we listen to live classical music. "There's nothing that compares with revisiting pieces you know and love, and the enjoyment of having them performed freshly, with an emphasis on something you haven't heard before," he says.

As a great artist who comes from a family of classical musicians, Alexander understands this firsthand. He's deeply committed to performing the core repertory of the NAC Orchestra—Beethoven, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Brahms—in the 2015–2016 season. And the new Music Director has an equally strong commitment to new creation.

*continued on page 3*

Message from the CEO	2
NAC Presents: An important stage for Canadian artists like Emilie-Claire Barlow	4
NAC Dance Masterclass boosts confidence and opens young minds to contemporary art	4
The Study/Repast: Exploring and celebrating the Indigenous Body of Work around the stage and around the fire	5
French Ontario: slamming, singing, reciting and partying at the NAC's French Theatre	6
Create an account online and see your giving history plus much more!	6
Donor Profile: Kenneth and Margaret Torrance	7
Making Giving Easy	7
Calendar of Events	8
Five Minutes with Anna Wang	8

IN THIS ISSUE

Alexander Shelley  
takes the podium with  
the NAC Orchestra  
Photo by Dwayne Brown

# Message from the National Arts Centre Foundation CEO

Fall is an exciting time at the National Arts Centre as we raise the curtain on a brand new season. We have some iconic and important works coming to our stages this year.

This fall has special meaning for the NAC Orchestra and music lovers as we welcome a new Music Director and conductor to the podium. I've had the privilege of being in the audience when Alexander Shelley has been conducting. I've watched the Orchestra move in unison and respond enthusiastically to his leadership and I understand why there's a real sense of excitement around Alexander's arrival at the NAC.

One of the first pieces Alexander and the NAC Orchestra will perform this season is a newly commissioned work called *Dear Life*. Our new Music Director has a commitment to creation which aligns with the NAC's mission to invest in more new Canadian works. He is also committed to meeting as many donors as possible. Alexander has already met with some supporters over the past couple of months and people have come away engaged by his vision and excited to play a role in the new era of music at the NAC.

As a loyal supporter, you help make new creation possible and play a starring role in bringing the best works and artists to Canada's stage. In this issue of *Full Circle*, I hope you'll enjoy reading about some of the many

ways your generosity is making an impact. Whether it's helping to build confidence in dance students; supporting vital programs like the *Summer Music Institute* and English Theatre's *The Study*; or giving talented artists like Alexander Shelley the chance to honour their commitment to new creation, your support is behind every achievement we celebrate.

With gratitude,



Jayne Watson



Jayne Watson  
Photo by Ottawa's  
Valberg Imaging

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*From cover:*

# Welcoming a new maestro to the podium: **Alexander Shelley begins his tenure as the NAC Orchestra's Music Director**

"The other element of engaging with music is listening to something we don't already know. It's like meeting new people. It reminds us of how much innovation is already there in the pieces we think of as standard works," Alexander explains. "By being involved with creation, we gain a new perspective on the pieces we know and love."

Whether it's the great classics or new works he's commissioned, Alexander is looking forward to performing with the NAC Orchestra, who he describes as "some of the finest musicians you'll ever meet." He credits his predecessors, specifically Pinchas Zukerman, for placing the NAC Orchestra at the forefront of orchestras around the world and says his first intention as Music Director is to support that legacy.


"I want to build on and develop the burgeoning international reputation of the Orchestra," says Alexander. "And I'm excited for us to build a reputation as a cutting-edge centre for new work where the greats co-exist happily with the newest creation. We're in a strong position to do that because the NAC Orchestra has a heritage of great quality and style in core repertory, and as a national institution we have a responsibility to offer a forum for creativity."

Alexander admits it's an ambitious plan, and he's grateful to NAC donors who share his vision and passion for the music. "To fulfill our plan to be a catalyst for creativity throughout the country, we count on donor support," he says. "It's humbling to meet people who invest their hard-earned money

in this vision. I feel a responsibility to give donors a clear idea of what the vision is and to show them that they're investing in something enduring. Because that's what the arts are all about."

In fact, Alexander has already met with many valued NAC donors and hopes to meet with many more at the beginning of his tenure. "This is a community of brilliant, visionary people," he says of NAC's supporters. "I am deeply grateful for their support. From a musical artistic point of view, I'm looking forward to the NAC being my home. I already feel this is a home I'll be proud of and take great pains to care for."

**Alexander Shelley,  
the NAC Orchestra's  
new Music Director**  
Photo by Thomas Daag



We are lucky to have  
visionary individuals  
engaged in the National  
Arts Centre, supporters  
who understand how  
important the arts are  
for the soul of culture.

Alexander Shelley



I'm happy and proud to have the support of my home country and grateful to NAC supporters who help to grow the careers of Canadian musicians.

Emilie-Claire Barlow

Emilie-Claire Barlow will perform with the NAC Orchestra in December  
Photo by Steve Webster

## NAC Presents: An important stage for Canadian artists like Emilie-Claire Barlow

Emilie-Claire Barlow, a Juno Award and National Jazz Award winning vocalist from Toronto, calls it a dream come true.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, Emilie-Claire will perform with the NACO Orchestra in Southam Hall as part of the *NAC Presents*, in partnership with BMO Financial Group. "I'm very much looking forward to playing with the NAC Orchestra," she says. "It means so much to me to bring music alive on stage in my home country."

This is not the first time Emilie-Claire has performed here. As she says, "I've had a wonderful, long relationship with the NAC." In the past, Emilie-Claire has performed in the NAC Studio twice, as part of the *NAC Presents*.

"I'm happy to see the NAC dedicate itself to building the careers of Canadian artists," says Emilie-Claire. "By investing in Canadian artists it benefits us all."

Simone Deneau, *NAC Presents* Producer, agrees. "*NAC Presents* is a vehicle for artists to be featured on a national stage. Investing in an artist with great potential, then inviting them back to perform on bigger stages, for bigger audiences, speaks directly to our commitment to championing their work and supporting their creative growth," she says.

In Southam Hall, Emilie-Claire will perform a selection of festive favourites as well as introduce pieces from her new album *Clear Day* recorded with Grammy-Award winner Metropole Orkest. "I've invested a year of my life to create this album. It can be a scary thing to do as an artist. You do it to express yourself and to reach audiences," she says. "That's why I'm so grateful to NAC donors. When people support the NAC, the NAC can in turn support us. And that support reinforces that I'm doing the right thing with my life."

## NAC Dance masterclass boosts confidence and opens young minds to contemporary art

A high school student stares awestruck at a photo of a young dancer flying through the air. "Who is that?" he asks.

Siõned Watkins, Education Associate and Teaching Artist, Dance at the NAC, smiles at the student. "That's you," she answers.

This memorable moment took place recently during a NAC Dance masterclass led by Sarah Doucet at Rideau High School. Siõned was snapping photos and happened to catch Daniel in mid-air.

"When I showed Daniel the picture, he was almost in tears. It gave him the fire to try other forms of dance," she says.

Last May, NAC Dance brought the masterclass to 121 students at three Ottawa high schools. Students were first shown the unique film, *Chain Reaction*, created by NAC Associate Dance Artist, Dana Gingras and her multimedia dance company, Animals of Distinction.

"The dance piece is 99% floor work on top of animation that's moving," explains Siõned. "I thought this film would resonate with teenagers because it's very edgy and hip. It would open the minds of students—especially boys—to contemporary dance."

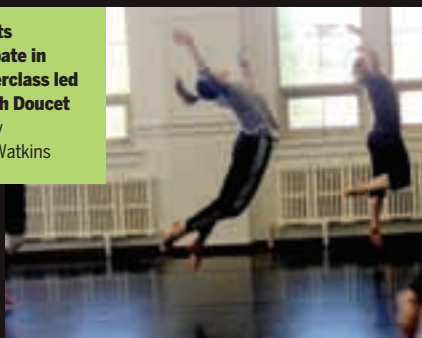
After viewing the film students with all levels of dance experience were encouraged to discuss it with Sarah, one of the film's dancers. Sarah then taught the students repertoire from the film.

"At first, even the high level dancers felt like they wouldn't be able to do the work," admits Siõned. "But Sarah taught them tricks and I saw a huge boost to their confidence. Suddenly they're leaping through the air."

Siõned is grateful to NAC supporters for making learning opportunities like this one possible. "We have to give teens every opportunity to open their minds to contemporary art," she says. "Your support gives young people the chance to ignite the passion in their hearts and explore their own artistic vision."

Students participate in a masterclass led by Sarah Doucet

Photo by Siõned Watkins





5

Smudging ceremony  
performed during  
The Study on  
Manitoulin Island  
Photo by  
Marnie Richardson

CANADA IS OUR STAGE.

## The Study/ Repast: Exploring and celebrating the Indigenous Body of Work around the stage and around the fire

During one of the afternoons at the Debajehmujig Creation Centre on Manitoulin Island, legendary performing artist and writer, Margo Kane gave an impromptu performance of her one-woman show *Moonlodge*.

“Margo read her text, accompanied by her drum, and the force of her genius instantly transformed us into groupies,” recalls Sarah Garton Stanley, Associate Artistic Director, NAC English Theatre.

This unforgettable performance by the Cree-Saulteaux artist was a highlight of *The Study*—an investigation of the Indigenous Performance Body of Work attended by over 100 leading artists, producers, institutions and students. For two weeks last May, the participants explored the work through movement and play reading exercises, mapping and recording, eating and improvising.

“*The Study* was an opportunity to acknowledge Indigenous theatre artists as a unique and essential voice in Canada,” explains Jillian Keiley, Artistic Director for English Theatre at the NAC. “the stories of Indigenous Canadians are the bedrock of the Canadian story. Theatre offers the opportunity to share the story.”

New stories are great, but as storytellers, we need to know our past before we can tell fully realized stories about our collective futures.

Sarah Garton Stanley,  
Associate Artistic Director NAC English Theatre

Sarah agrees, adding that *The Study* will change the ways in which mainstream theatres refer to Indigenous programming. “The event showed that stories told by Indigenous theatre makers are central to our shared Canadian stories,” she says.

*The Study* culminated in a two day show-and-share called *The Repast* that live-streamed on the NAC website. “The live-stream was a huge success,” Sarah says. “Not only did the NAC see higher than usual numbers, it was immediately transformed into a public archive and will doubtless mark a precipitous moment in Indigenous Performing Arts Culture.”

Sarah and Jillian are grateful to donors like you for the role you play in bringing Canada’s Indigenous Body of Work to light. “With your support we were able to give voice to these essential stories in a national context,” Jillian says. “I’m so proud of *The Study* and what it has done and what it will continue to do for Canada and the Theatre.”

You can share in the exploration by watching *The Repast* at [nac-cna.ca/en/cycle/indigenous](http://nac-cna.ca/en/cycle/indigenous)

## French Ontario: slamming, singing, reciting and partying at the NAC's French Theatre

Our French Ontario celebrations in September featured poetry, theatre, and music from a dozen artists who care about their land and its language. The occasion was a festive happening at the NAC's French Theatre to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag, the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franco-Ontarian Day (September 25) and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the French presence in Ontario.

The theme for the show *À quoi ça sert d'être brillant si t'éclaires personne* was developed by co-directors Gabriel Robichaud and Lisa L'Heureux out of their love for Franco-Ontarian literature.

According to Lisa, "French Ontario covers a vast land mass. Each region has its own unique connection to the language. Some of the writings are highly urban while others are defined by rural life. Nonetheless, cultural vitality seems to be flourishing everywhere—not only in the escalating number of performances but also in the variety of artistic endeavours being offered to the public."

The two directors were given carte blanche for the project, which they described as a dream come true. "This recognition from the NAC is a gift. The opportunity to bring famous artists

together on stage with absolute creative freedom in using Franco-Ontarian speech from yesteryear and today does not come along too often."

On an uncluttered stage with only mics, music stands and instruments, the words of Patrice Desbiens, Jean Marc Dalpé, Robert Dickson, Sonia Lamontagne, Tina and Éric Charlebois, and others, were brought to life through performances by actors like Nicolas Desfossés, Céleste Dubé, Anie Richer, Pierre Simpson and Gabriel Robichaud, with musical accompaniment by the Pandaléon trio, singer-musicians Mehdi Hamdad and Stef Paquette, singer Andrea Lindsay, and slam poet Charlotte L'Orage.

Lisa L'Heureux was delighted with the confidence placed in her by French Theatre Artistic Director Brigitte Haentjens,

**Lisa L'Heureux**  
Photo by Pink Monkey Studios



proudly declaring "Brigitte, who used to live and work in Sudbury, has made an enormous contribution to Franco-Ontarian theatre. She is an extraordinary artist imbued with humanity and humility, and her artistic vision has been an inspiration to me. She is thoroughly familiar with French Ontario and treasures it as well. It is an immense honour to have had her support in this crazy but wonderful venture."

## Create an account online and see your giving history plus much more!

At the NAC Foundation, we're committed to making your interactions with us as easy as possible. And, in this modern age, that means redesigning our website to give you online access to information about your donations.

Simply visit our website today and create an online donor account. Once you do, you'll have access to your giving history—right on your computer, phone or tablet. You'll also be able to change your address, and let us know what updates and other information you'd like to receive from us.

You can also make a safe, secure charitable donation to the NAC Foundation in support of the performing arts and receive your tax receipt instantly.

Of course, if you'd prefer to speak to someone in the Foundation Office, we're available to take your call. Online or on the phone, we're always happy to hear from you.

Visit [nacfoundation.ca](http://nacfoundation.ca) to create your donor account.





**Kenneth and Margaret Torrance with their granddaughter, Jacklyn**  
Photo by Mark Reynolds

## Donor Profile: Kenneth and Margaret Torrance

### Sharing their passion for the performing arts past, present and future

It is the early 1970's, and Canadians Kenneth and Margaret Torrance, recent returnees from Norway, are already regular patrons of the National Arts Centre, often with their three-year-old daughter in tow. "We brought her to the NAC Family concerts", recalls Margaret. "She was fascinated by musicians and especially the percussionists, so we sat in the mezzanine front row, where she could observe the drums being tuned and tested."

Margaret and Kenneth exposed both their children to music, hoping they would grow to share their enthusiasm. Imagine their joy when their daughter took up the flute and their son chose the clarinet. And now, the Torrances' appreciation of the arts is being shared with the next generation. One of their granddaughters is playing her mother's flute, and acting in dramas; the other sings in a choir and plays the electronic keyboard.

Many people want to share their love of the performing arts with others, and Kenneth and Margaret have taken their commitment to the next level. In honour of their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, they've made a generous gift in support of the first commission of the 2015/2016 NAC Orchestra season, *Dear Life*. Composed by young Canadian pianist, Zosha Di Castri and inspired by Alice Munro's short story, this is the Orchestra's first

performance under the leadership of Music Director Alexander Shelley.

"Supporting the commission is a fine way to bring people together, celebrate our anniversary and make a positive difference," says Margaret. "We're very supportive of innovation and new creation."

While the Torrances' anniversary gift is having an impact in the hearts of audiences right now, they remain committed to opening young minds to the arts for generations to come.

"We're making a gift in our Wills to the NAC Foundation because we realize the importance of giving in perpetuity," says Kenneth. "We recognize the value of the arts and want to make a difference where we can, now and well into the future."

## Making Giving Easy:

The ideal time to remember the people and things that have meaning in your life

As another fall begins, now might be a good time to revisit your Will.

In fact, there are many times in our lives when it makes sense to visit a lawyer for just this purpose. Perhaps your children have grown and are now financially independent. Maybe you've recently welcomed the birth of a new grandchild or there have been other significant changes in your family. Even something as simple as travelling south for the winter is a good reason to review your Will and ensure it continues to reflect your wishes and passions, including your commitment to the performing arts.

Making a charitable gift in your Will to the NAC Foundation is an opportunity to give back to something that has held a meaningful place in your life, while still taking care of your loved ones and other priorities in your life. It is the ideal way for you to play a crucial role in the future of the performing arts in Canada. After first taking care of your family and loved ones, you can leave a lump sum, a percentage or the residue of your estate to support the NAC and the performing arts.

However you choose to make a lasting impact, your bequest is the ideal way to play a crucial role in the future of the performing arts in Canada and share your passion with generations to come.

*For more information about making a gift in your Will to the NAC Foundation please contact **Barry Bloom** at **613-947-7000 ext. 314**.*

# Five Minutes with Anna Wang:

## A Q&A with a proud participant of the *Summer Music Institute*

Anna Wang, a promising pianist from Victoria, spent part of the spring season learning from the best at the NAC's *Summer Music Institute (SMI)*. The 19-year-old took a break from rehearsals to talk to us about her second time at the *SMI* and what it has meant to her as an emerging artist.

**Q:** When did you first know you wanted to seriously pursue the piano?

**A:** The winter of Grade 10. Driving home from a ski trip, I was listening to my iPod. As usual it was turned down to around 30% volume because I was, in those days, overly-paranoid of hearing loss. The track was Liszt's B minor Sonata. Something compelled me to turn up the volume. Consequently, I felt as if my ear was

opening up for the first time—I heard worlds of colours I had never realized existed! The experience moved me so much that it made me want to keep music close to me forever.

**Q:** Can you describe your first experience at the *SMI*? What was the highlight for you?

**A:** The highlight was working with Tatiana Goncharova. She directly addressed my needs as both a pianist and as an individual, and from her guidance I gained not only insight but confidence.

**Q:** How does it feel to be back at the *SMI*?

**A:** I'm so happy to be back! This year, I'm learning even more. I love my ensemble—all the members work so well together and really complement each other.



Anna Wang  
Photo  
submitted

**Q:** Why are programs like the *SMI* so important for young musicians like yourself?

**A:** It offers us the experience to work with a high-level faculty, collaborate with stellar colleagues, and participate in an intense schedule of concerts, masterclasses, lessons, rehearsals, and solo practice sessions. Fully-funded programs such as *SMI* are rare. They really reward merit and cultivate potential, helping us on our route to become everything we hope to be and more.

**Q:** What would you like to say to donors who help make programs like the *SMI* possible?

**A:** A big thank you! What you offer to youth is invaluable. Programs like the *SMI* are the foundation of our future success.

## Calendar of Events

A special thank you to our Open Rehearsal and Preview sponsor, Rob Marland, Royal LePage Performance Realty.

DATE AND TIME	EVENT/ SPECIAL INFORMATION	INVITATION ONLY	PRODUCERS	DIRECTORS	MAESTROS	PLAYWRIGHTS	BENEFACTORS	SUSTAINERS	ASSOCIATES
October 22, 2015 6:45 pm	Donor Preview – English Theatre: <i>The Adventures of a Black Girl in Search of God</i>		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
November 18, 2015 7:15 pm	Donor Open Rehearsal—NAC Orchestra: <i>A Little Night Music</i>		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
November 19, 2015 6:15 pm	Donor Preview—French Theatre: <i>5 Kings</i>		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
December 10, 2015	Corporate Circle Reception: Natalie MacMaster	•							
January 6, 2016 9:15 am	Donor Open Rehearsal—NAC Orchestra: <i>Beethoven or Bust</i>		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
January 21, 2016 6:45 pm	Donor Preview—English Theatre: <i>Twelfth Night</i>		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
January 28, 2016 1:15 pm	Open Rehearsal—Dance: <i>Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Going Home Star—Truth and Reconciliation</i>		•	•	•	•	•	•	•

For further information or to register for any of the events above, please contact:

**National Arts Centre Foundation**

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