

SPRING/SUMMER 2011

# Full Circle



**The Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment:** A legendary Canadian's passion for the piano results in a permanent commitment to young artists across the country

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Avan Yu, Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment recipient, performs at the NAC Gala with Yo-Yo Ma in 2009  
Photo by Mike Pinder

**"The Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment allows us to nurture Canadian talent and ultimately help their careers. It gives the National Arts Centre the opportunity to support young musicians and urge them on in the right direction."**

—Christy Harris, Manager,  
Summer Music Institute

Bryan Wagorn remembers feeling nervous. After all, it wasn't every day that this fledgling pianist, in his first year at the NAC's Summer Music Institute (SMI), had the chance to meet an incredibly well respected politician and patron of the arts. Bryan wanted to make a good impression.

"Mr. Sharp and I met at a donor reception, but as soon as we started talking my nervousness disappeared," Bryan recalls. "I saw how kind and warm Mr. Sharp was. We spoke as fellow musicians, commiserating about how difficult Bach was to perform."

Now a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at the Manhattan School of Music, Bryan has also performed as a soloist at Carnegie Hall and at other renowned venues around the world. He was also one of the first artists to benefit from the *Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment*, which was created in 2001 to offer exceptional training to young musicians.

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# message

## from the National Arts Centre Foundation CEO

As summer approaches, I am filled with a renewed appreciation for all that your support helps us accomplish. Together, we share a passion for heart-stopping performance, for inspiring new creation, and for instilling in young people a love for the performing arts that they will carry with them throughout their lives, thanks to the NAC's compelling arts education programs.

To fully appreciate the impact of your support, we need only reflect on some of the highlights of the past season at the NAC.

We began the season with the Mozart-Haydn festival, "A Musical Friendship." Thousands were swept away by this stirring celebration of music and history that connects these two composers. And who could forget the stunning brilliance of *La Bayadère* by the Mariinsky Ballet (the Kirov), which was here for six performances in February! The opportunity to bring the best of the world's classical ballet to our national stage says a lot about the NAC that you have found in your heart to support. Finally, in the spring, Prairie Scene provided invaluable exposure for hundreds of talented artists from Manitoba and Saskatchewan. All of us at the NAC were very proud to showcase this richness of talent and culture and share it with the rest of Canada.

In this issue, we want to share with you how your commitment to the NAC and the performing arts also gives life to creation and learning. Thanks to you, ballet masters from the Mariinsky Ballet held three master classes for students at the NAC. We're also delighted to tell you about the opportunities your support helps give young playwrights in Canada to develop their talent and create new work.

Every day I feel fortunate to be able to see the impact of your passion and support for the performing arts. I see it etched on a young artist's face when he takes a bow after a flawless performance. It's there in the gratitude of a playwright who sees her story come to life for the first time. And it's in the delighted eyes of the student who never realized classical music could be so moving.

Thank you so much for making these magical moments possible.



Jayne Watson  
CEO, NAC Foundation



Photo by Michel Dozois

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# *The Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment:* A legendary Canadian's passion for the piano results in a permanent commitment to young artists across the country

*continued from page 1*

Before his passing in 2004, Mitchell Sharp had the satisfaction of knowing he would be providing a legacy that supports gifted young musicians like Bryan, and to help them develop their full musical potential. "It's quite an honour to have the name of this incredible person attached to you," Bryan says.

Avan Yu agrees. The 23-year-old Canadian pianist has performed in recitals and as a soloist with orchestras on four continents, but says he will never forget how he benefited from the *Mitchell Sharp Endowment* in 2005.


"The award made it possible for me to come to the SMI and study at the NAC," Avan says. "It was my first opportunity to meet musicians who had the same goals as I did. My experience at the SMI ignited my interest in chamber music and did a lot for me in terms of musical development. Being accepted into the program was one of the best things to happen to me."

The Honourable Mitchell Sharp is remembered for his service as a federal cabinet minister. He was also a key player in the creation of the NAC, and was a longstanding NAC subscriber and supporter. This May would have been his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

"Mitchell Sharp was genuinely interested in supporting young musicians," Christy Harris says. "With the endowment, he is continuing to make a huge impact in their lives. His passion lives on, giving young artists the chance to take part in training programs and benefit from opportunities to foster their talent that they might not otherwise have."

Every year for the past 10 years, one promising musician has been given such an opportunity. The endowment covers tuition at the SMI, plus room and board. The endowment provides artists with advanced musical training and close collaboration with world-renowned musicians such as Maestro Pinchas Zukerman. "The SMI was one of the highlights of the year for me," says Bryan, who participated as a student for four years and who now takes part as a mentor and teacher. "To suddenly be in a group of musicians from all over the world was amazing. We worked so hard, we practiced so hard. We soaked it all in. My level of skill jumped higher in those two weeks than at any other time of the year."

If Mitchell Sharp were here today, he would surely be proud of the musicians he helped nurture and the careers he helped launch, thanks to his foresight and generosity. Donors like you should feel proud, too. With your support, you play an important role in the development of many young artists. "The power of the arts to influence and move people is very strong," says Avan. "Your generosity changes so many lives. It brings the highest level of performance to Ottawa and around the world."



Bryan Wagorn, one of the first artists to benefit from the *Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment*  
Photo by Matthew Sileo

*Dance students receive instruction from  
Mariinsky Ballet Master Sergy Bereznoy  
Photo submitted*



# *Russia's Best brings out best in Ottawa dance students*

*E*ighty-eight students from 20 different dance schools from Dartmouth, NS to the east and Toronto to the west participated in three master classes led by the Mariinsky Ballet (the Kirov). Ballet Masters Sergy Bereznoy and Igor Petrov, and Ballet Mistress Elvira Tarasova put the young dancers through the rigors of professional-level classes.

Using French, which is the international language of ballet, teachers communicated steps to the students, making only minor corrections in English. The young people were intense, focused and nervous as they did barre and centre work.

The pace was quick and expectations were high, but the young dancers rose to the challenge and all seemed thrilled by their once-in-a-lifetime experience.

"This class was all about expression — heads and arms — and beyond just standard technique," said Claire Rudnicki, who currently takes classes with Hamilton City Ballet. "We sometimes forget dance is an art, an opportunity to express ourselves. This class reminded me of that."

As members of the Mariinsky Ballet entered the rehearsal hall during the master class, some of the younger dancers appeared to be a bit intimidated. "That's when I got really nervous!" one participant said.

"What I enjoyed was the Russian performance quality," said Michelle McKernan, a dance teacher at Woodroffe High School in Ottawa. "The ballet mistress had very high expectations of the students. At a class like this, the learning is in the doing."

Greta Leeming, founder of the well-known Greta Leeming Studio of Dance in Ottawa, was proud of the participants. "The NAC is wonderful to bring opportunities like this for local dance students. We didn't have this back in the early days, and I think the young dancers really benefited from the experience."

The NAC provides opportunities like master classes as part of its focus on arts and education, and its commitment to investing in the next generation of Canadian artists. Master classes are made possible through the generous donations of our donors.



From stage to screen:  
*Incendies*  
receives an  
Oscar®  
nomination

*“Incendies was a groundbreaking work of Canadian Theatre when it premiered in 2003. Now it is quickly gaining a reputation as one of the finest Canadian films ever made.”*

Peter Herrndorf, President and  
CEO of the National Arts Centre

It was a proud moment for Wajdi Mouawad, writer, director, actor, and artistic director of NAC French Theatre—and for everyone at the NAC—when the critically acclaimed film *Incendies*, based on Wajdi’s play of the same name, was nominated in the Best Foreign Language Film category at the 83<sup>rd</sup> Academy Awards®.

“*Incendies* the film was inspired by *Incendies* the play, which was inspired by a woman, Soha Becharra, who was imprisoned for six years in Khiam in southern Lebanon,” explains Wajdi. “For me, the success of this play and the film is a way to give back some life to a woman whose life was taken away from her.”

Quebec filmmaker Denis Villeneuve was so moved by Wajdi’s play when he first saw it in Montreal in 2004 that he decided to adapt it into a screenplay, and eventually turn it into a film. It has since received lavish praise at film festivals around the world, and recently won eight Genie awards, including Best Picture.

# From donor to on-stage talent

Large opera and dance productions seem so professionally staged that it might come as a surprise that they sometimes require a bit of “local talent!” Companies often recruit extra cast members, known as supernumeraries or “supers” for certain scenes, such as crowd scenes.

With so many involved — sometimes over 80 people onstage at once — the supers get a real appreciation of the scale of a world-class production by an international company.

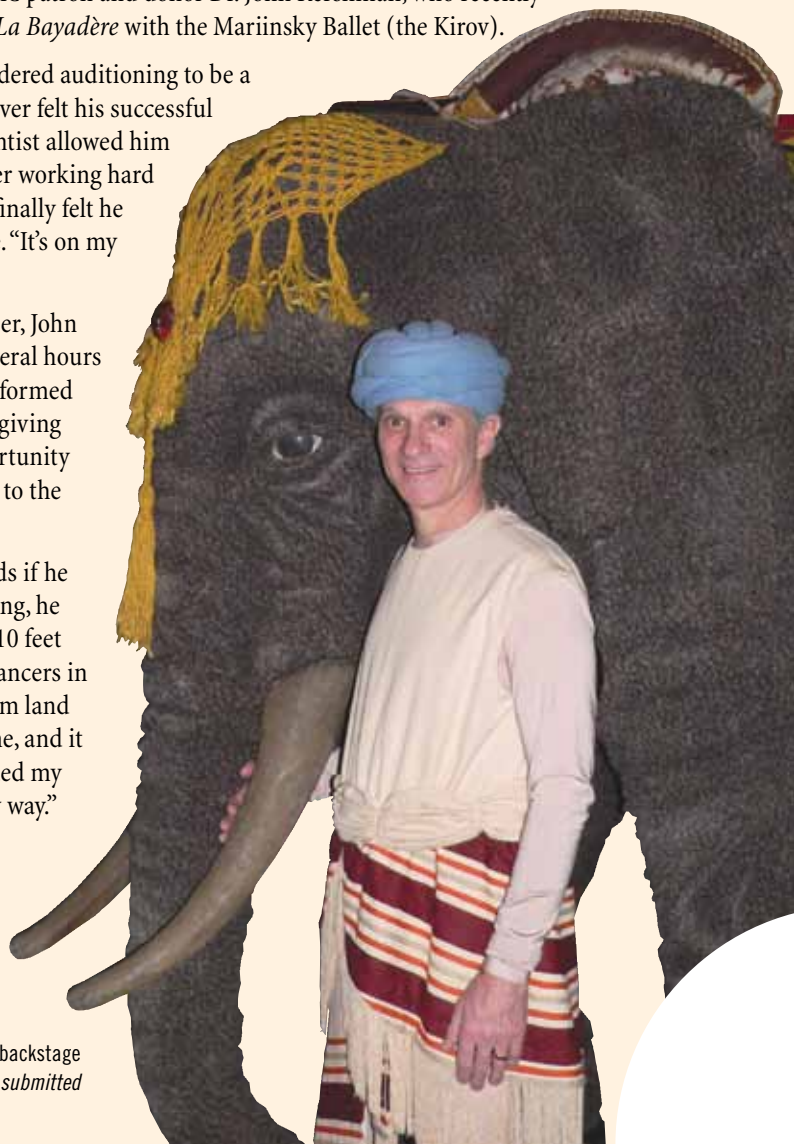
They also get the experience of a lifetime.

Just ask long-time NAC patron and donor Dr. John Kershman, who recently appeared onstage in *La Bayadère* with the Mariinsky Ballet (the Kirov).

Though he had considered auditioning to be a super before, John never felt his successful career as an orthodontist allowed him enough time. But after working hard for over 20 years, he finally felt he had to make the time. “It’s on my bucket list,” he said.

As a *La Bayadère* super, John auditioned, spent several hours in rehearsals and performed in six performances, giving him the unique opportunity to be extremely close to the onstage action.

When asked by friends if he got paid for performing, he says “Yes! I got to be 10 feet away from the best dancers in the world, having them land two feet away from me, and it was all free! It exceeded my expectations in every way.”



Dr. John Kershman poses backstage  
Photo submitted

# *Playwrights in Residence:* Providing talented creators with the invaluable gift of time

When Tara Beagan was seven, her father took her to the library. It was there that she discovered the theatre section. She began to sign out plays and make the kids in the neighbourhood act them out. “I would rewrite the lines,” Tara laughs. “The playwright could have been George Bernard Shaw for all I knew.”

It wasn't long before writing for theatre became a full-blown passion. Tara wrote her first full-length play, the award-winning *Thy Neighbour's Wife*, in 2004. “I wrote much of that play in a notebook while I was working as an usher at the Princess of Wales Theatre.”

Paula Danckert, Dramaturg of NAC English Theatre, says that's why the *Playwrights in Residence* program is so important. “Any opportunity that makes time available for someone to write is special. Often the craft is not especially lucrative, and playwrights have to scramble to find the time. This program gives talented people like Tara 10 weeks to do what they want to do. And what they want to do is write.”

Believing that playwrights are at the heart of theatre development, NAC English Theatre is delighted to partner with the Canada Council for the Arts—and thoughtful supporters like you—to offer a fifth season of the program. This year, we're especially

grateful to an anonymous donor whose generosity will also fuel the fires of creation at the NAC. The program invites playwrights of Aboriginal or culturally diverse background to join the English Theatre Company. “The *Playwright in Residence* becomes a central part of our theatre company. That's how Shakespeare created,” Paula says.

As for Tara, she couldn't be more excited to be this year's *Playwright in Residence*. “It's an incredible opportunity to see theatre get made on such a grand scale, with all the resources and the English Theatre Company. I can access the talent to workshop the plays I'm writing. The impulse to create is always there. Thanks to the program, I have a built-in home in which to do just that.”

*If you have an interest in supporting a specific program, like Playwrights in Residence, please contact Barry Bloom at the NAC Foundation at 613-947-7000, ext. 314.*

*“Without donor support for Playwrights in Residence at the NAC English Theatre, we would miss opportunities to know who the next great artists will be.”*

—Paula Danckert, Dramaturg,  
NAC English Theatre



Tara Beagan, this season's  
*Playwright in Residence*  
Photo by Keith Barker

# Donor Profile:

## Rick Frank

Rick Frank, Dufferin Research Inc.  
Photo submitted



## How membership in the Corporate Club enriched this donor's life

Rick Frank admits he wasn't a fan of the performing arts. Before the President and CEO of Dufferin Research Inc., a marketing research company in Ottawa, joined the National Arts Centre Foundation's Corporate Club, he'd only been to the NAC once or twice. "When I was growing up, my idea of performing arts was a rock concert," Rick says.

Then in 2006, Rick got a call from someone at the NAC Foundation, inviting him to join a new fundraising initiative called the Corporate Club, which offers small business owners like Rick many benefits, as well as the opportunity to make a difference in the community. "The Foundation explained what they were trying to do and I was receptive to the idea. I saw it as a way to encourage the arts and contribute to the community."

What Rick didn't expect was how much he would come to love the performing arts. "My first ballet was Swan Lake by the Kirov. A friend dragged me to it kicking and screaming! But I was totally taken aback by the performance and amazed at how well I received it. Now I go to the ballet every year and seek it out when I visit other cities. If I hadn't joined the Corporate Club, I never would have been exposed to the beauty of dance."

In fact, Rick has developed an appreciation for all the performing arts. He purchases 10 to 12 pairs of tickets each year in addition to the complimentary tickets he receives through the Corporate Club. "My habits

have changed. Now I can't imagine my life without the arts. We're very lucky to have the NAC in Ottawa."

The business owner says he enjoys the many perks and benefits of Corporate Club membership, including reserved parking. Rick also appreciates opportunities to take part in donor events, such as the Canada Day rooftop party to see the fireworks. "That's a winner every year," he says. In addition, special networking events give Corporate Club members the chance to talk business and discuss the arts they love and support. "We may have different reasons for belonging to the Club, but we all think it's a good thing to do."

As a successful business owner with five employees, Rick is happy to promote the benefits of Corporate Club membership. "Culture is something you can't buy. You have to be a part of it, experience it and learn from it. Whether you use your tickets yourself or give them to your employees or clients, it's important to support the arts. I would encourage other business owners to give the Corporate Club a try. Once you experience the quality of the performing arts at the NAC, you'll want to do your part to help them stay around!"

*For more information about the Corporate Club, please contact Barry Bloom at the NAC Foundation at 613-947-7000, ext. 314.*

## Ask the Expert:

### Legacy Giving: Sharing your passion with future generations

Mitchell Sharp had a passion for the performing arts. So deep was his love of performance and his commitment to learning and creation, he wanted to share it with all Canadians, including future generations. That's why he created the *Mitchell Sharp Young Musicians Endowment*, which will help ensure a legacy of enriching lives for years to come.

Sharing your passion with future generations is incredibly powerful. One way is by leaving a bequest in your will. By doing so, you too can help invest in the next generation of Canadian artists and audiences. Your legacy will help emerging artists develop their careers, and will provide

young people with opportunities to experience the beauty of live performance.

Creating a legacy of your own is easily done by including a clause in your will. After taking care of your family, you can simply leave a lump sum or a percentage of your estate to support the NAC and the performing arts you love. Thanks to your generosity, you will be giving countless generations the chance to share your passion.

*To discuss leaving a bequest for the NAC in your will, please contact Barry Bloom at 613-947-7000, ext. 314.*



# Five Minutes with Sean Rice

## A Q&A with one of the NAC Orchestra's youngest and newest members

Last October, the NAC Orchestra had the pleasure of welcoming award-winning clarinetist Sean Rice in the position of Second Clarinet. We caught up with the talented musician to discuss his passion for the clarinet and the impact attending the NAC's Summer Music Institute (SMI) made on his career.

**Q: How and when did you get interested in the clarinet?**

**A:** I was 10 years old and attending elementary school in St. John's. The band program started then and I wanted to join. Initially, my school music teacher had asked me to play the tuba because I was one of the larger kids in the class. I had known that my father had played the clarinet when he was my age, and that was my inspiration in choosing the clarinet.

**Q: How did attending the SMI for two years benefit you as an artist?**

**A:** I'd been going to music festivals for a few years, but those two summers were different [2005 and 2006]. It was an opportunity to work closely with musicians my age to see what they were doing, and to learn from their experiences and their approach to music. In addition to rehearsals with our respective chamber ensembles, I remember how accessible the faculty was to all of

the students. There wasn't a day when we did not have coaching with one of the principal NAC Orchestra's wind players, and each of those sessions was intensive, enlightening and inspirational. These experiences are invaluable when you're a developing musician.

**Q: What went through your mind when you were offered the position of Second Clarinet with the NAC Orchestra?**

**A:** I was thrilled. It was something I was really hoping for after I had advanced to the finals for the audition. To work and perform with the musicians of that orchestra would be a dream. When I got the call, I was in the middle of teaching a class. I peeked at my phone and saw the number had a 613 area code. I couldn't wait for class to end so I could check my messages!

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




**A:** Your support is more valuable than you know, especially today when there are so many cuts to music programs across the country. You're providing invaluable experience to young artists and investing in their futures and the future of our art.



Photo submitted

## 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
June 8, 2011 7:00 p.m.	<b>Donor Open Rehearsal - NAC Orchestra</b> <i>Beethoven's Ode to Joy</i> 		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 16, 2011 6:30 p.m.	<b>Corporate Club Reception</b> <i>Cirque de la Symphonie</i>	✓							
June 29, 2011	<b>"A Round of Applause" Donor Appreciation Event</b> 		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 30 to July 3, 2011 Canada Day at the Shaw Festival Niagara-on-the-Lake	Attend the Shaw Festival and celebrate Canada Day with the Friends of English Theatre and receive discounts on tickets. *		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
July 1, 2011	<b>NAC Foundation Canada Day Thank You Party</b> 		✓	✓	✓				
September 16 to 18, 2011 Stratford Shakespeare Festival	Attend the Stratford Festival with the Friends of English Theatre and receive discounts on tickets. *		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
October 17 to 27, 2011	Friends of English Theatre visit London, UK and attend performances in the West end, at the Royal Shakespeare Company and National Theatre. Deadline for booking is July 8 <sup>th</sup> . *		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

\* Friends of English Theatre is an independent membership driven group that supports English Theatre at the National Arts Centre. For further information call 613-726-9330 or email: franny@magma.ca

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

**National Arts Centre Foundation**

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