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who we are in the dark: Canadian dance work one of the first to benefit from the National Creation Fund

It began with an unexpected collaboration between two diverse artists.

For most of her career as a Canadian dance artist, Peggy Baker had worked mainly with classical musicians. For her latest piece Peggy wanted to collaborate with a woman from the rock-and-roll world.

"I wrangled an introduction to violinist Sarah Neufeld who is from the

award-winning band Arcade Fire. We created a short piece and performed it together and had a blast," Peggy recalls. "On the morning of our second show we decided we were going to create a full-length performance."

who we are in the dark is the result of that collaboration and it's bigger and bolder than anything Peggy has done before. "I knew I had to create a show with more visual richness to meet the sonic power of Sarah's music," says Peggy.

Peggy's latest creation features seven dancers, up from her usual five. It's also visually and technically complex. "Visually I wanted to go beyond pure lighting design and expand it to include projection design and soft drops (a backdrop made from fabric)," Peggy explains. "Plus the complexity of this particular live music requires a sound engineer to run it. It's much more technical than anything I've done in the past."

So much about Peggy's recent work makes it an ideal project to receive an investment from the NAC's newly launched National Creation Fund. Beginning in November 2017, the Fund will invest up to three million dollars a year in the development of 15 to 20 compelling and ambitious new Canadian works in theatre, dance, music and interdisciplinary performing arts — works like *who we are in the dark* that have strong artistic teams and producing partners, and are likely to have national and international impact.

"It takes a lot of time and resources to create works that are bold and ambitious, to test ideas and go beyond the initial concept," says Heather Moore, Artistic Producer, National Creation Fund. "If we want Canadian artists to punch above their weight, which they have the talent to do, we need to support them."

continued on page 2





Led by The 7 Fingers, Artcirq, and Taqut Productions, *Unikkaaqtuat* is a major multidisciplinary production that will also receive an investment from the National Creation Fund
Photo: Guillaume Saladin

"Your support for the National Creation Fund is visionary. Your belief that, given the chance, more Canadian artists can jump up to participate on an international level is extraordinary. It takes courage, imagination and aspiration for what the arts can achieve."

Peggy Baker, Canadian dance artist

From cover:

who we are in the dark:

Canadian dance work one of the first to benefit from the National Creation Fund

Peggy submitted a proposal to the National Creation Fund and was delighted when *who we are in the dark* was selected to receive an investment to support its final development trajectory, which culminates in a week-long technical residency in a fully equipped theatre with the entire creative team and final design elements.

"We wouldn't be able to do the technical residency in a theatre without this funding and that's the silver bullet for this project," says Peggy. "The whole show is highly technical and it would have been risky to bring it to the stage without the residency."

Heather says she's talked to many artists like Peggy who tell her the first time they see their show come

together with lighting, sound and projections is opening night. "All artists talk about the importance of time to nurture, time to bring their entire creative team together," says Heather. "With this funding we're giving Peggy the chance to work with her whole team, to simulate the actual theatrical experience and refine the work to put it over the top."

Peggy is grateful for the National Creation Fund, which helps artists across the country think larger and ask the question, "What if?" Peggy confides, "It's a game-changer. Already doors are opening for me. For the very first time my company has the opportunity to pitch this work for international presenters. I wouldn't have been given this opportunity if I didn't already have the kind of backing that allows

presenters to be confident in what I may be able to bring them."

The National Creation Fund only came into being thanks to the extraordinary generosity of NAC supporters. "I'm so thankful to the donors who had the vision to support artists in the hard-to-define creation process," says Heather. "As projects develop, we're going to post videos and updates on the website and encourage donors to come out and see the progress, to follow the work and understand they helped make it happen. I want supporters to have pride in the work they were a part of creating."

Visit nac-cna.ca/en/creationfund for updates on the various projects receiving an investment from the National Creation Fund.

Message from the National Arts Centre Foundation CEO

A new season is always a reason for celebration. This September we have another cause for celebration as we look ahead to 2019 and the 50th anniversary of the National Arts Centre. We will have many exciting events to mark this milestone year.

An important anniversary is the ideal time to take stock of what we've achieved and where we're heading. It's impossible to look back without recognizing the unwavering support of our donors. The projects we've become so well known for would not have happened without your generosity.

New Canadian creation is a big part of what we have to celebrate as Canada's NAC. We're proud of our National Creation Fund and the inspiring works of art it makes possible including a new work from Peggy Baker Dance Projects, which you can read about in this issue. Investing in big, bold Canadian projects underscores that the arts matter in Canada.

It's important to tell Canadian stories on Canadian stages and by investing in new creation we're giving our artists a way to help build and knit our country through our shared experiences. On behalf of every Canadian artist with a story to tell and the thousands of people who will be inspired by these stories, I'm grateful to everyone who supports new creation.

Our supporters have been a key part of every success at the NAC for the past half century. You are also the reason the NAC can look ahead to the next 50 years with pride and excitement because you've shown us the art of the possible. With a new leader, Christopher Deacon, at the helm, the NAC will continue to be a catalyst for performance, creation and learning. With caring supporters like you by our side, the best is truly yet to come.

With gratitude,



Jayne Watson



Jayne Watson

Photo: Ottawa's Valberg Imaging

Apprenticeship gives university students a real-life orchestral experience

It was an opportunity University of Ottawa (uOttawa) student Shang Jung (Kitty) Chan couldn't pass up. This was her chance to spend three weeks with the NAC Orchestra.

"I've always looked up to the musicians in the NAC Orchestra," says Kitty. "Being able to rehearse with them was the highlight of my music career."

Kitty was one of two uOttawa students selected for the apprenticeship which took place during the 2017–2018 season. The young cellist, along with bassist Gabriel Sakamoto were given the opportunity through a custom-designed pilot project initiated by uOttawa and the NAC's *Institute for Orchestral Studies*.

"After this opportunity, I'm more certain than ever about being an orchestral musician," says Kitty. "I've decided to pursue my Master's in Music Performance and give it my best shot."

The cellist enjoyed every moment she spent with the Orchestra and was impressed with how quickly the musicians were able to play through work. "Everyone is always fully prepared. It's very admirable," she says.

Kitty is grateful to donors for being part of this life-changing opportunity. "The investment you make can turn a student's life around," she says. "Opportunities to work with professionals are important because students will not always receive the real-life experience of being in an orchestra in a university setting. For students like me, an opportunity like this might be all the encouragement they need to continue their hard work."

Thanks to donors like you, the NAC and uOttawa will continue the program next season.

Shang Jung (Kitty) Chan
Photo: Jimmi Cai



Production renewal takes sight and sound at the NAC to a whole new level

For 14 weeks this past summer the performance spaces at the NAC appeared to be dark and quiet. After all, there were no performances to grace our stages.

But appearances can be deceiving. Beginning in 2016, a lot has been going on behind-the-scenes. Thanks to a \$225.4 million investment from the Government of Canada as part of the NAC's Architectural Rejuvenation and Production Renewal Project, three performance spaces have been receiving much-needed upgrades. The most noteworthy upgrade took place this past summer with the installation of a new Orchestra Shell in Southam Hall.

"The new Orchestra Shell will not only dramatically improve the sound in Southam Hall, it will

further refresh the appearance," says Randy Desrochers, Project Manager, NAC Production Renewal Project. "Positioning the NAC Orchestra closer to the audience allows the music to carry even better and there will be more clarity to the sound. The Shell also helps artists hear each other more clearly on stage."

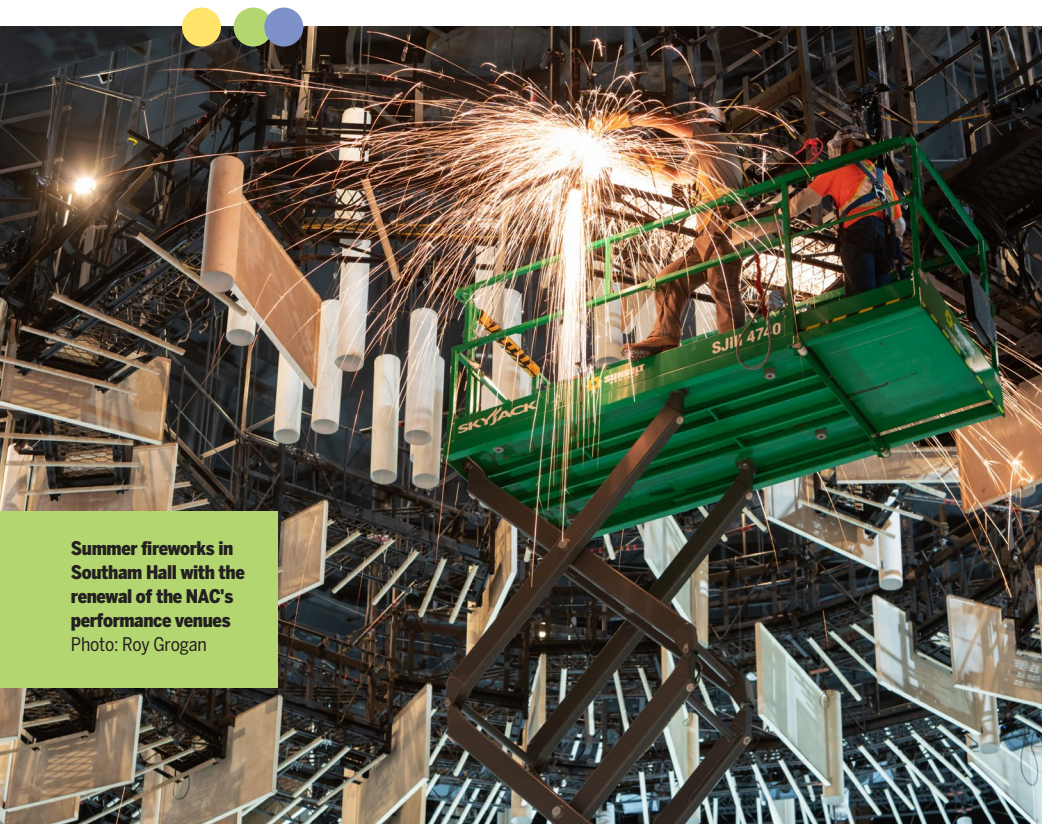
While Southam Hall is NAC's signature venue, its acoustics have always been problematic. That's because the hall was designed for opera, not for an orchestra. Renewal began in 2016 with a renovation that included new flooring and seating which improved the acoustics.

In addition to the new Orchestra Shell, there is also a new sound system. "This will enhance great experiences for all sorts of shows including the NAC Orchestra's Pops concerts," says Randy.

The Production Renewal Project also included upgrading theatrical and technical infrastructure such as theatre lighting and audio-visual equipment; improving isolation to block the transmission of the sound and light between the performance spaces and the foyers; as well as electrical and mechanical work.

"As we look forward to our 50th anniversary season, we are making upgrades that will bring the NAC's performance venues and their infrastructure to international standards for artistic expectations, safety, universal accessibility and patron satisfaction," Randy says.

Performance venues will be ready to start the 2018–2019 season in September and Production Renewal will continue until the end of 2018 without interrupting the season.



Summer fireworks in Southam Hall with the renewal of the NAC's performance venues
Photo: Roy Grogan

"The work taking place this summer in our performance halls and production facilities will have a profound effect on the quality of the experience for the audience and for artists."

Randy Desrochers, Project Manager,
NAC Production Renewal

Jamaal Jackson, poet laureate and *Moving Stories* storyteller performs with students

Photo: Siônéd Watkins

***Moving Stories* gives students the chance to express themselves in a powerful way**

The student was understandably uncomfortable. Before enrolling in a dance class at his high school, he had never danced before. “He was more prepared than he thought. He shone in the show,” says NAC Dance Education Associate and Teaching Artist Siônéd Watkins. “That’s part of what *Moving Stories* does. It helps shape students into confident young adults.”

Moving Stories began with a visit. Three storytellers, poet laureate Jamaal Jackson, Indigenous poet Doreen Stevens and English Theatre resident Sarah Waisvisz, shared their stories with students at

Earl of March High School. The students worked collaboratively to create movement for eight stories. Their hard work cumulated in a performance on May 28.

“The show received a standing ovation,” Siônéd says. “It was so meaningful for the students to bring the work they had created with professionals to the NAC stage.”

The students can also use the recording of the performance to help open doors to post-secondary dance programs. In fact the “intro” and “outro” for *Moving Stories* was created and danced by aspiring professionals including three graduates who performed in the 2016 program. Seeing what their peers have achieved since performing in *Moving Stories* is hugely inspiring for these dancers.

Programs like *Moving Stories* are possible thanks to donors and Siônéd is grateful for the role you play. “With your generosity you give young people the opportunity to express themselves through a process that’s creative and collaborative.”

Celebrating diversity through music in New Brunswick

On the day of the workshop, the young musicians didn’t understand what was happening at first. Composer, Andrew Miller asked the students to put away their music stands and try improvising. “Andrew wanted to loosen them up and open their minds to other ways they could be creative with their instruments,” explains Jennifer Grant, General Manager, Symphony New Brunswick.

Opening young minds was the goal of *Celebrating Diversity*, a project which explored cross-cultural possibilities in music teaching and performance. Administered by Symphony New Brunswick in partnership with the NAC’s *Music Alive Program*, the project included a workshop followed by a concert for the Saint John and Area School String Program.

The students were introduced to Aboriginal ceremonial drumming by Saint John elder, Sheila Croteau. “Sheila explained the important place drumming holds in Indigenous culture and the students were fascinated. Afterward, they did their own interpretation, drumming with their instruments,” Jennifer recalls.

Also central to the project was Inuk soprano Deantha Edmunds-Ramsay who shared her original song, its significance and some of her Inuit culture.

“The students were attentive and respectful and I was impressed with their level of playing and artistry,” says Deantha. “They dove right into the score and brought it to life.”

Deantha says she believes the project gave students “a glimpse into a ‘new’ culture which is thousands of years old”. Jennifer agrees. “The project enlarged the students’ understanding of the Inuit culture,” she says. “One cannot overestimate the value of integrating cultures for young people. Celebrating our diversity is an incredibly important part of who we are as Canadians.”



“I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of this project to celebrate Indigenous culture and diversity.”

Deantha Edmunds-Ramsay, Inuk soprano. Photo: Lynette Mason, Mason Photography

Le reste vous le connaissez par le cinéma:

a decidedly modern and powerful Greek tragedy

According to Christian Lapointe, the director of *Le reste vous le connaissez par le cinéma* (his translation of Martin Crimp's *The Rest Will Be Familiar to You from Cinema*), Crimp neither preaches nor writes message plays. Here, the British playwright transposes an ancient Greek myth that continues to resonate today as if time had stood still.

The play will premiere at ESPACE GO in Montreal and then will be performed as part of the NAC's French Theatre program from November 14 to 17. It is a radical take on Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, a drama that tackles questions of alternating power, dictatorship and democracy.

The director, who has followed Crimp's writing, translation and teaching work for years, has himself come up with a new translation of the play, which is noteworthy for its orality – hence the decision to use Quebec French.

Christian notes that: "Crimp's dialogue is meant to be spoken in everyday language, and Quebec French is a language, not an accent. There is no need to look to Paris to render the great myths. Our own language brings out the inherent humour and enables us to identify with the historical figures."

Speaking of long-term relationships, the artistic collaboration between Christian and the NAC goes back nearly 20 years.

As Christian puts it: "I am in constant dialogue with the institution. I could even be described as a child of NAC French Theatre, having worked on Denis Marleau's first three lab productions in the early 2000s, not to mention the subsequent co-productions with Wajdi Mouawad and, currently, with Brigitte Haentjens. My professional and personal



***Le reste vous le connaissez par le cinéma*, a Carte Blanche production, in co-production with ESPACE GO and the National Arts Centre's French Theatre, will be on the Babs Asper Theatre from November 14 to 17, 2018**

Illustration by Julie Charland

relationship with her is very special. In 2007 she chose me as her protégé for the Siminovitch Prize." The prestigious \$100,000 prize, \$25,000 of which goes to the protégé, celebrates excellence and innovation in Canadian theatre.

"Without Brigitte and the NAC, it would have been impossible to produce the play. The \$140,000 we received from the National Creation Fund allowed us to move ahead with a major project. NAC French Theatre is a leading proponent of theatre that is challenging without being elitist, and I am proud to be a part of it."

The National Creation Fund would like to warmly thank its generous donors for their unfailing support. Thanks to the Fund, Christian can now work with a larger cast of 14 performers, considerably extend the development period and include a one-month residency in a fully equipped rehearsal hall.

Donor Profile: Carol Fahie

Keeping the arts alive and thriving in Canada

The first time Carol Fahie saw Yo-Yo Ma perform was at an open rehearsal at the National Arts Centre. It was special for Carol all the more so because her bass-playing son, 20-year-old Rob, was sitting beside her.

“Rob was in awe and had a huge grin on his face,” Carol recalls. “There was Yo-Yo Ma, dressed in casual clothes, playing with the NAC Orchestra. Rob watched his every move. It’s a shared experience I’ll always remember.”

Carol has had many memorable moments at the NAC, both in the audience and as a performer on the stage in Southam Hall. A lover of music, Carol has had the thrill of singing with various choirs at many events at the NAC including the final concert directed by Pinchas Zukerman. She was also there when her son, Michael, who plays lead trombone, won an *NAC Orchestra Bursary Award* and performed at the Fourth Stage.

“Music is an integral part of my life. In a very frantic world, I need to make music and hear music to keep me balanced and soothe my soul,” says Carol.

To show her gratitude for the music and the special moments Carol has enjoyed at the NAC, she’s proud to donate to the NAC Foundation through annual contributions and naming a seat in Southam Hall. “My support is a thank you for having the opportunity to hear wonderful music by world-renowned musicians and to perform beautiful choral works with such a great orchestra,” she says.

Carol also wants to help emerging young artists to develop their talents like her sons did. Today, Michael and Rob are professional musicians who have played at the NAC. “I understand that good training and role models are required for young musicians to grow and flourish,” says Carol. “They need every kind of support they can get and the training opportunities offered by



Carol Fahie
Photo: Kara Taylor

the *Young Artists Program* and the *NAC Orchestra Bursary* are wonderful.”

As a NAC Foundation supporter, Carol appreciates the chance to attend open rehearsals and special events. But her first reason for supporting the NAC is her commitment to keep the performing arts in Canada thriving. “We must keep the arts alive,” she says. “Talented people need time, training and support to develop to their full potential. That’s what we help make possible when we give to the NAC Foundation.”

Making Giving Easy:

Designating your support to what’s important to you

Our donors are special people. They have a real appreciation for the performing arts and the NAC’s role in bringing the best of music, theatre and dance to our stages.

Many of our supporters have a special passion. For some it’s the NAC Orchestra. For others it’s theatre or dance. Still other donors are committed to sharing their love for the performing arts with future generations. At the NAC Foundation, we recognize that every person is different with their own unique interests. As a result, we are

proud to offer those who are considering a charitable gift in their Will the opportunity to designate their gift.

For example, you can designate your gift to the *National Youth and Education Trust* to benefit emerging artists and students, or to music, theatre or dance. You can also direct your gift to highest priority needs where it will be used wherever it’s needed most. All we ask is that you make your designated gift as broad as possible so we can put it to the best use.

Designating your gift is a choice you make as is leaving a charitable gift in your Will. You can turn your money over to the government through taxes or you can give it to a cause that means a lot to you. By making a gift in your Will to the

NAC Foundation, you’ll receive a tax receipt and offset some of the estate taxes, potentially leaving more for your loved ones and the organizations you care about. Please talk to your lawyer or financial advisor about planning ahead and making a bequest.

At the NAC Foundation, we deeply appreciate all legacy gifts made by our generous supporters. If you decide to make a designated gift of your own, we promise to use it as requested and as effectively as you would want and expect from your National Arts Centre.

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

Five Minutes with Alisa Klebanov:

A Q&A with the winner of the 2018 *NAC Orchestra Bursary Competition*



Alisa Klebanov
Photo: Bronwyn Fong

In May, violist Alisa Klebanov won the *NAC Orchestra Bursary Competition*, which provides recognition and financial support to help further the development of young musicians who have connections to the National Capital Region. Today, Alisa talks about how winning the award will help her achieve her goals.

Q: What did the competition mean for your growth as an artist?

A: I think as a growing artist, especially for musicians seeking an orchestral career, it is very important to participate in competitions such as the *NAC Orchestra Bursary* since it gives us an opportunity to experience what a professional audition would be like.

Q: How will the award help you achieve your goals?

A: Because of this award, I will be able to explore more options concerning my education. I will be auditioning to

master programs for viola performance next year and now I can explore more options outside of Canada.

Q: What message would you like to send to NAC supporters who help make the *NAC Orchestra Bursary Competition* possible?

A: I would like to thank them for supporting the arts. Young aspiring musicians like me would not have gotten to where we are now without your generosity. This bursary is such a big step towards becoming a professional. Thank you for making it possible and for your support for the wonderful *NAC Orchestra*.

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

Please see the enclosed Calendar of Events for our list of fall Open Rehearsals and Previews.

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

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