

SPRING 2009

Friends

THE NEWSLETTER OF

Friends OF THE
Center
FOR THE
Arts

Exciting New 2009-2010 Season of Great Performances Announced!

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EXCITING NEW
2009-2010 SEASON OF
GREAT PERFORMANCES
ANNOUNCED!

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Friends of the Center for the Arts were treated to a sneak preview of the 2009-2010 season at a special reception held in the Center on April 1, the evening prior to the official release of the Great Performances schedule at a press conference. Friends had a chance to win prizes, enjoy delicious desserts and beverages, and mingle with fellow Friends and the Center's staff.

There are over 50 performances scheduled for the coming season, which features the usual broad array of contemporary and classical music, dance and theater. Several audience favorites will return, including the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra, Chanticleer, Jeffrey Siegel (featuring the music of Chopin), and the Mark Morris Dance Group. The Virginia Opera will perform Puccini's *La Boheme*, Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*.

Theater will be well represented by L.A. Theatre Works performing two radio plays: *War of the Worlds* and *The Lost World*, Aquila Theatre Company presenting *As You Like It*, and The Acting Company performing *Romeo and Juliet* as well as an adult version of *Alice in Wonderland*. Classical music lovers will be delighted to see and hear three symphony orchestras, a chamber orchestra, and a ballet company on the Center's main stage.

Director of Artistic Programming, Tom Reynolds commented that this season is truly remarkable for its international flavor. From Great Britain, we will

have the opportunity to see the Richard Alston Dance Company, the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, the Band of the Irish Guards and Royal Regiment of Scotland, and the King's Singers; from China, the Shaolin Warriors and the China Philharmonic Orchestra; from Ukraine, the Virsky National Dance Company; from Finland, the Circo



Aereo; from Canada, the Canadian Brass and Natalie MacMaster; from Russia, the Moscow State Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Moscow Festival Ballet; from New Zealand, the Black Grace Dance Company; from Japan, TAO: The Martial Art of Drumming; from Germany, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival Orchestra; and from Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, the African Children's Choir. Think of how much you can save in airfare alone by seeing these international groups perform here in Fairfax!

More information about next year's Great Performances is available in the season brochure, which you can pick up in the Concert Hall lobby or request at www.gmu.edu/cfa. Friends are encouraged to enjoy one of the benefits of membership by receiving priority processing of early subscriptions and thus obtaining better seats in the concert hall. See you in September!

Save These Dates!

Friends Special Events

Saturday, November 14, 2009: China Philharmonic Orchestra
Saturday, February 27, 2010: Virginia Opera, *Don Giovanni*
Wednesday, April 7, 2010: 2010/2011 Season Preview
Sunday, April 11, 2010: African Children's Choir

Artists in Conversation (formerly "Discussion Series")

Members will receive an invitation by email with the date, time, and location of the *Artists in Conversation* event connected to the following performances:

The Flying Karamazov Brothers

Circo Aereo, *Espresso*

The Acting Company, *Romeo and Juliet*

Black Grace

Virginia Opera, *Porgy and Bess*



Membership Updates

What makes membership in the Friends of the Center for the Arts valuable to you?

That is the question that Paulette Miller, Vice President for Membership, hopes that you will help to answer. She has announced new initiatives to enhance the value of being an FCFA Friend. In the near future, a survey will be distributed to all members to determine what makes being an FCFA member so valuable, and Paulette hopes you will take a few minutes to answer it. She adds that your input is very important to us. We recognize that our membership is diverse and that every one has different interests. Some members value the priority ticketing opportunities above all else while others enjoy the social events and still others join for the members-only discussion series. This survey will give members the opportunity to tell us what they like. So if we don't have your e-mail address yet, be sure to stop by the Friends Coffee Area the next time you attend an event and leave your e-mail address in the Friends notebook. Or contact Debbie Paez (dpaez@gmu.edu or 703-993-4188) at the College of Visual and Performing Arts and leave it with her. Every Friend is a valuable Friend!

Paulette also noted, "FCFA wants to increase the communication with all members

to provide them with information in a timely manner." This includes expanded use of email. In addition to the upcoming survey, she said that electronic communications will also be used for invitations to events and other announcements and, in the future, for posting and/or distribution of the Friends' periodic newsletters.

"We want to make new members feel welcome when they join FCFA," Paulette added. "We will call and welcome them individually, as well as publically welcoming them at special events. We also will encourage members in the Friends' refreshment area to meet new people and make them feel welcome." With people-to-people contact, Paulette anticipates that when renewal time comes around, the feeling of camaraderie in a friendly atmosphere will inspire new members to renew and continue their experience.

Other members' activities are being considered, including staffing FCFA booths at local community events and festivals to attract new members. Paulette is excited about the many upcoming opportunities to enhance FCFA membership and make it a memorable and rewarding experience.

Resignation of Staff Writer Robin Auger

Robin Auger is leaving her role as newsletter staff member, citing family considerations. We will truly miss her excellent, timely and interesting articles. Also, as FCFA Membership Vice President, she developed the membership "Push" nights which are now standard practice. We thank her for her participation in both positions and wish her and her family the very best of everything.

If you are interested in becoming a "guest" writer for the newsletter, please contact Jane Tombes (atombes@cox.net or 703-319-1888). The work consists of attending planning meetings, researching a topic and writing an article, and making corrections as directed.

Notice to Great Performances patrons: Free parking is available in **Lot K** during any public performance or event at the Center for the Arts (includes Great Performances, Pre-performance Discussions, Friends Events, Vision Series and Student/Faculty performances).

You risk a parking fine and/or towing if you park in any other lot on campus.

Please note that Lot K is restricted to permit holders at all times except for the events mentioned above. If you are visiting campus for a meeting or other reason, please use the visitors parking deck adjacent to the Center for the Arts, Concert Hall.

Friends: Boosters at the Next Level

What better place than the annual Friends Opera Brunch to find both new and long-time members for our continuing series on what prompted people to join the Friends of the Center for the Arts!

Among new members, **Bob and Connie Kepner** cite the opportunity to enjoy the arts in a location convenient to their home. The quality of programming encouraged them to join, and the pre-performance discussions have added so much to their knowledge of the productions. For example, they spoke of the value of the discussions in creating for them a deeper appreciation of the ballet.

Don Palomaki, whose wife, **Sonja**, is a Friends board member, says he joined the Friends initially because of his wife's interest (and the free coffee!), but also as an opportunity to socialize with others of similar interests. He does not remember any specific artistic inspiration as a child, but in high school he collected the top-ten records and played them occasionally at Record Hops. In college, he did learn to enjoy all kinds of music when he took a classical music class.



(left to right) Don Palomaki, Bob and Connie Kepner

Anne and Arthur Fredrickson have been members for ten years. Anne received her Master's degree from GMU, and they both enjoy the variety of programming and the convenience of the location. They have been introduced to many performances that they might not otherwise have seen.

An avid supporter not only of the Center for the Arts, but also The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Kennedy Center, and the Opera Guild, **Terry Bursey** is a new Friend who loves all aspects of the arts, especially classical music and theatre. He, too, appreciates the variety of programs offered by the Great Performances series.

Among Friends of the Center for the Arts board members, **Joan White** is inspired by the opportunity to be a part of an organization which supports her passion for the arts and her desire to share that passion with the community.

When she was a child, her father, a violinist and child prodigy, played his classical records for her. He also took her to symphonies, the ballet, and musical plays, thus exposing her to almost every performance genre. These life experiences have made the arts an integral part of her life.

Paulette and Mack Miller have been Friends for approximately six years, and Paulette is now Vice President for Membership. They have always loved the theater and early on discovered Mason's Theatre of the First Amendment. They then began to attend the Great Performances Series and now subscribe to the Virginia Opera season. One night they stopped at the Friends Table and the rest is history! It just seemed to make sense to support the performing arts program by joining the Friends. When their sons were in orchestra and drama in high school, they were active booster parents. According to Paulette, "Friends are like being Boosters at the next level." Being part of this community enriches their lives and although neither Mack nor Paulette is a musician, dancer or actor, they are great fans and feel incredibly fortunate to have the Center right in their back yard.



Anne and Arthur Fredrickson



<http://fcfa.gmu.edu>

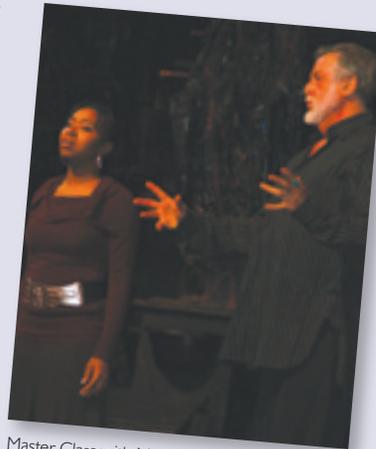
Saturday, February 14: Opera Brunch, *Tosca*



Opera Brunch decorations



Friends enjoying Italian-inspired brunch buffet



Master Class with Maestro Peter Mark

Thursday, March 5: Discussion Series Event on *Fado* Music at the home of Tom and Eve Ezell



Friends listening to a lecture



Angelo Ferreira,
Guitarist for Mariza



Friends enjoying Portuguese Paella

Saturday, March 21: Russian National Ballet, *Sleeping Beauty*



Joanne Kunz and Dan Herman



Walt and Harriet Mika

Wednesday, April 1: 2009/2010 Season Preview



Paul and Margaret Andino



(left to right) Thelma Weiner, Doris Weisman, Lorraine Rosenberg, Norm Rosenberg, Burt Weisman

Guide to Understanding the Friends Groups: A Reprise

We are including a Winter 2007 Friends newsletter article in this issue because people continue to ask questions about the variety of Friends organizations associated with the College of Visual and Performing Arts and the Center for the Arts. We hope the information here will clear up any uncertainty, beginning with a brief history of our group – the Friends of the Center for the Arts.

The Center for the Arts (CFA) opened in 1990 and thereafter gradually developed a loyal group of performing arts lovers. In 1996, a few of these loyal supporters formed a support group for the Center and the Great Performances. This group grew and evolved over time and ultimately became what it is today, the **Friends of the Center for the Arts (FCFA)**. The FCFA is now a vibrant community of over 600 households directly supporting the Center through contributions and volunteer efforts. FCFA has been a major reason for the Center's growth over the years.

Our successful formula has not gone unnoticed and has served as a model for the formation of other groups throughout the College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA). However, there is a major difference between FCFA and other Friends groups. **Whereas FCFA was formed primarily to provide financial support for the Great Performances, most of the other Friends groups are focused on fundraising to support Mason student scholarships within the various CVPA academic departments and programs.**

These support groups include Friends of Dance, Friends of Music, Friends of Theater, Friends of Art, and Friends of Film. Mason alumni contribute a portion of the funds, but these groups also reach out to the larger community to showcase their students' talents and to receive financial support.

The **Faculty Arts Board**, a Mason faculty support group for the CFA, focuses on hosting pre-performance dinners and lectures by other faculty that relate to the Center's Great Performances series.

The Theater of the First Amendment (TFA), Mason's professional theater company, includes the Producer's Circle, which raises funds to help underwrite TFA activities. One major TFA-sponsored project, launched in June 2008, was the Mason Summer Festival, a two-week long event featuring the best of the performing and visual arts in Northern Virginia.

Overarching all of these groups is the **Arts at Mason Board**, the umbrella organization for all of these groups. Board members include representatives from all Friends groups, the CVPA academic department dean and chairs, and representatives from the Northern Virginia community. The board advises the CVPA Dean on setting priorities and implementing programs and activities. Among its primary functions is raising private support for the Arts at Mason.

The annual "*Arts by George*" is the board's signature event, focusing primarily on raising scholarship funds for CVPA students and the Great Performances. Last year's third annual event had the highest rate of participation ever, raising \$112K in scholarship funds for students in the College of Visual and Performing Arts and the Great Performances Series.

Dean William Reeder came to Mason in 2001 to lead the new College of Visual and Performing Arts. His vision was clear: he proposed that these separate arts groups would form the base of a larger structure that would provide support both for the College and the CFA Great Performances series. The past eight years have seen tremendous growth in numbers and contributions from all of these organizations, thanks to his vision.

In a recent interview, Dean Reeder stated that he has achieved about one-third of the goal he has set for the College and the Center. To achieve the rest of that goal, he lists several ways to succeed. First, since every arts organization needs a strong volunteer base to provide "firepower" for its mission, other arts groups should follow our lead as the largest and oldest of the Friends groups to expand their base in membership and contributions. Second, the concert hall must experience a major renovation. Third, TFA should eventually have its own home, preferably in Fairfax. Finally, the Mason Summer Festival in June should continue as an essential way to promote community participation with the university. With Dean Reeder's leadership and enthusiasm, we are bound to succeed in helping him to meet all of those goals.



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<http://fcfa.gmu.edu>



Dean Reeder

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GREAT PERFORMANCES AT MASON

May | June

Saturday, May 9 at 8 pm: **Natalie MacMaster**

May 31- June 27: **2009 Mason Summer Festival**
Visit www.masonfestival.org for more details!

Thank you for a great 2008-2009 Great Performances at Mason Season!
See you this Fall!

2009-2010 FCFA OFFICERS

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DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

The Friends of the Center for the Arts would like to use electronic communications more frequently in order to make better use of your contributions. Next time you are at the Friends refreshment area, please check the binder to see if we have your correct email address or you can send your current email to dpaez@gmu.edu.
We do not share email addresses.