

SPRING 2010

THE NEWSLETTER OF

Friends OF THE  
Center  
FOR THE  
Arts

# Friends

## Celebrate the 20<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Season of Great Performances at Mason

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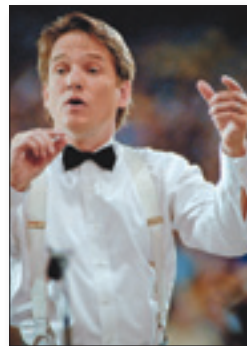
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Thanks to record attendance and artistic triumphs it has been an all-star season of *Great Performances* at the Center for the Arts. Yet as Friends of the Center who attended the April 7 "sneak preview" of the 2010-2011 season discovered, the best is yet to come! The preview party, our largest ever with more than 250 guests, was catered by the new Mason Inn Conference Center and Hotel. The party offered a chance to meet friends, win exciting door prizes and be the first to learn about the coming season.

Our 20th anniversary year brings back a host of audience favorites and introduces many renowned and emerging artists to our audiences for the first time. Look for the **Russian National Ballet Theatre's** highly acclaimed versions of the classic



Aquila Theatre- *A Midsummer Nights Dream*



Keith Lockhart- BBC Concert Orchestra



Chanticleer Christmas



Photo by Theo O. Krantz©

The Merchants of Bollywood

**Siegel** offers four new programs in his popular *Keyboard Conversations* series. Additionally, Tom Reynolds, Director of Artistic Programming, Marketing and Audience Services encouraged all Friends not to miss the Center debut of **Brooklyn Rider**, a brilliant young string quartet whose performances have wowed critics and audiences alike.

The **Virginia Opera** returns with four spectacular productions -- Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Mozart's *Cosi Fan Tutte*, Wagner's *The Valkyrie* and Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. Dance enthusiasts

will delight in contemporary programs by **Mark Morris Dance Group**, **Momix**, **Lar Lubovitch Dance Company**, **Parsons Dance** and **Trisha Brown Dance**. Bring the entire family to the sensational **Bayanihan Philippine National**

**Dance Company** and **Drumline Live**. **Tango Buenos Aires** returns with dazzling footwork and the **Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra** promises to bring sizzling Latin energy to a spirited performance.

Next season, **L.A. Theatre Works**, **The Aquila Theatre** and **The Acting Company** will present gripping dramas and laugh-out-loud comedies. And **Theater of the First Amendment** will recreate the nostalgic radio days of the 1930s in their new production, *Live Wire*.

Holiday music lovers can look forward to a virtuosic **Chanticleer Christmas**; **The Waverly Consort's** medieval music; the **Synergy Brass Quartet's** joyful sounds; **Leahy's** Celtic Christmas traditions, and the beloved **Vienna Boys Choir**.

The entire schedule is now available. Pick up a copy of next season's brochure in the Concert Hall lobby or request one by mail at [www.gmu.edu/cfa](http://www.gmu.edu/cfa). Friends of Center for the Arts can be assured of choice seats by getting their ticket orders in early to take advantage of priority processing.

FCFA members also receive invitations to Friends-only Artists in Conversation and Special Events. For more information contact Deborah Paez Hoesly at [dpaez@gmu.edu](mailto:dpaez@gmu.edu) or 703-993-4188.

### Save These Dates!

#### Friends Special Events

Saturday, November 6, 2010: BBC Concert Orchestra  
Saturday, March 5, 2011: Tango Buenos Aires  
Saturday, April 2, 2011: Virginia Opera, *Madama Butterfly*  
Wednesday, April 6, 2011: 2011/2012 Season Preview

#### Artists in Conversation

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

The Merchants of Bollywood  
New Orleans Nights  
Perú Negro with Eva Allyón, *Festejo*  
Aquila Theatre, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*  
Orpheus Chamber Orchestra

ballets *Romeo and Juliet* and *Swan Lake*; London's hit sell-out show **The Merchants of Bollywood**; and Oscar and Tony Award winning stage and screen actor **Joel Grey** who will headline the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the annual ARTS by *George!* event on Saturday, September 25, 2010.

Mark your calendars for classical music of the highest caliber including the **BBC Concert Orchestra**, the **Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie** and the **Orpheus Chamber Orchestra**. Cherished Concert Hall regular **Jeffrey**



### ***FCFA lost a dedicated long-term supporter when Jan Mulvaney succumbed to her eight-year battle with breast cancer in January of this year.***

Jan and Merle Mulvaney were familiar faces around the Center for the Arts since its beginning. They attended *Not Necessarily Opera* which was one of Virginia Opera's early performances at the Center, and think it, along with performances by Kathleen Battle and Issac Stern may have been their very first season.



Their regular attendance at CFA performances did not go unnoticed; thus when Sarah Lawless, the director of the Institute of the Arts at the time, solicited volunteers to support the activities of the Institute, the Mulvaney's were among those invited and they responded enthusiastically. Merle remembers attending that very first meeting of 15-20 people in the foyer of the Arts Center on April 20, 1996. That was the beginning of the Arts Center Associates (ACA). Jan and Merle shared Sarah's vision that the Associates would provide a familiar and friendly face to those attending performances.

Their favorite volunteer activities were manning the "Friends Information" table in the lobby, which they did many times, and occasionally hosting the "Friends Refreshment" area. In addition they actively recruited new members from attendees they met casually at the CFA as well as from their many acquaintances outside the CFA community thus bringing in new performance attendees as well as prospective Friends members. Jan's enthusiasm and sincerity were hard to resist.

Jan and Merle were subscribers to many, and a variety of different, performances and Jan especially enjoyed the opportunity that volunteering with the Friends gave for seeing performances they might otherwise not have chosen thus broadening their arts experience.

Jan and Merle have been important contributors to the evolution and successful growth of the Friends from those initial 15-20 individuals to the current roster of over 700 households.

We will miss her radiant smile and welcoming personality.

## DID YOU KNOW?

George Mason University was selected as a host for the Commonwealth's Confucius Institute through a competitive process. The public is invited to visit the Institute to do research, prepare for an upcoming trip to China, find needed Chinese resources, or simply have a conversation in Chinese. For more information call 703-993-4231.

## East Meets West

Last December Bill Reeder, Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, visited China as a member of the new advisory board for Mason's Confucius Institute. The trip was Dean Reeder's second and gave him a chance to explore many interesting facets of China's 5,000 year-old cultural history.

The visit was hosted by the Hanban agency of the Chinese government, which is responsible for the establishment of the Confucius Institutes worldwide. "The purpose of the Institutes is to advance the study of Chinese language around the globe, and to provide insights into modern Chinese culture," the Dean explains. It's also an opportunity to explore the viability of developing an international arts management alliance, building upon Mason's arts management masters program.

While in China, the Dean was treated to a surprise birthday concert of traditional Chinese instruments and music. Performed by faculty and students from Shandong University in the city of Jinan (a three hour high speed train ride south of



Beijing), the concert was a virtuoso showcase, presenting some of China's finest traditional performers. "These students and faculty reminded me of Jim Carroll's jazz students, combined with Met Jazz. They were that good!" said Dean Reeder.

The Dean is looking forward to returning to China for a third visit this coming July. "I anticipate an ever growing China-Mason connection with an increasing number of Chinese students electing to study at Mason," he says. "Hopefully, this connection will encourage continuous growth and exchange between the two halves of the globe."

# Marketing Survey – Your Membership at Work



Arts at Mason Board member, Mark Shugoll, CEO of Shugoll Research and President of the Arena Stage Board, is conducting a professional survey for CFA, donating the majority of the cost pro bono. FCFA is providing \$25,000 to support the project in order to gain a greater understanding of the market, determine which advertising methods work best, and seek ways to increase ticket sales for the *Great Performances*.

Mark has already sampled our subscribers, which includes most of our Friends, so some of you have likely participated in the online survey. About 300 subscribers responded, an unusually high percentage of participation.

The results are interesting and informational. For example, many subscribers were unaware that they received a discount

for subscribing and could receive an even greater discount for buying tickets to six or more events or for subsequently purchasing single tickets, suggesting that CFA needs greater emphasis on these discounts in its advertising. In response to a question about how important particular factors were in their decision to subscribe, the most important were quality of the program, value, variety, and seat location.

Mark Shugoll's Bethesda company has received many awards since its founding in 1957, including Forbes Magazine's Small Business Award for Commitment to and Innovation in the Arts, and The Washington Post's Award for Innovative Leadership in the theatre community. Shugoll has been quoted as saying that "The arts thrill us, challenge us, move us to joy and sometimes to tears, and help us understand and respect diverse lifestyles and cultures."

Remaining surveys will sample three other distinct CFA audience groups: single-ticket holders, lapsed subscribers, and those who attend arts events at other venues, but not at CFA. We will keep you posted about the survey results from these audience groups in future issues of this newsletter.

## See You at the Hylton Center

The Hylton Performing Arts Center on the Prince William campus of George Mason University celebrated its opening the weekend of May 21-23 with a Friday night performance of Leahy, followed on Saturday night with a Grand Opening event featuring the American Festival Pops Orchestra under the direction of Anthony Maiello. May 23 was Family Day which featured resident arts groups, including local theater, dance and music ensembles performing at both Merchant Hall and the Gregory Family Theater.

The facility is a magnificent, state-of-the-art structure. The Grand Foyer can host a 250-seat dinner or a reception for 500 people. The 1121-seat Merchant Hall is patterned after the great opera houses in Europe, with tiered circular balconies. The stage, which is bigger than the CFA Concert Hall stage, will accommodate productions of the largest ballet companies. A 115-person orchestra and a 100-person choir will comfortably fit on stage at the same time. The décor is highlighted by hammered copper fins in the ceiling. The 270-seat Gregory Family Theater is a flexible venue where the seats can be configured to suit performances. It will be used for local resident dance, music, and spoken word performances.

During the 2010/2011 season, there will be 13 performances in the *Hylton Presents* series. The Hylton Presents Series is similar to the CFA's *Great Performances*. Six of these performances will also play in the CFA Concert Hall. Tom Reynolds, Director of Artistic Programming, Marketing, and Audience Services for both the CFA and the Hylton Center noted that tickets for Hylton performances can be purchased at the CFA Concert Hall ticket office, which is convenient for residents of the Fairfax area. The CVPA marketing and development teams have coordinated with the Hylton Center staff on fundraising initiatives, and will continue to do so in the future. However, there will also be a dedicated marketing and development staff working at the Hylton Center.

The Hylton Center is the product of collaborative efforts between the City of Manassas, Prince William County, and George Mason University. Brian Marcus, Associate Dean for Development and Alumni Affairs in the College of Visual and Performing Arts, directed the fundraising efforts for the construction, as well as performing the function of project manager, where he was responsible for effectively managing all the efforts related to construction and outfitting of this new facility.



Hylton Performing Arts Center

Gregory Family Theater



Merchant Hall

<http://cfa.gmu.edu/friends/>



**Annual Opera Brunch Event with the Virginia Opera, Don Giovanni  
Saturday, February 27, 2010**



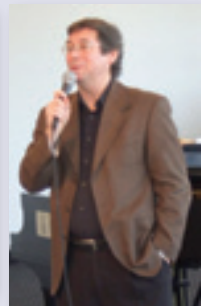
Carol Robinson (top) Kobi Bromley, Chuck Sords, Lynn Sords



Judy Weltz and Pat Warakomsky



John Kennelly, Virginia Opera



Joe Walsh, Virginia Opera

<http://cfa.gmu.edu/friends/>

**Friends Season Preview, Center for the Arts  
Wednesday, April 7, 2010**



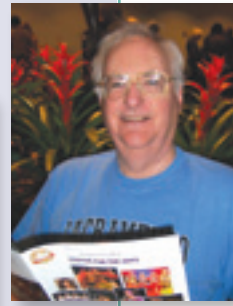
Friends enjoying wine and light fare before the program



Sheila Gold, Hans Grainer



Kay Gilbert, John Gilbert, Denice Salter



Bob Brown

**African Children's Choir, Center for the Arts, Grand Tier III  
Sunday, April 11, 2010**



Jack Rugh, Zaiton Rugh

Ed Johnson, Jean Duggan, Dan Ssuuna, Cathy Johnson



Pierre Hugins, Loise Ireland, Valentina Lukin, Slava Lukin



Andrea George, Richard Berggren, Judy Canyock, Beatrice Cole-Berggren, Samantha Cook, Gordon Canyock

**Porgy and Bess Artists in Conversation, Center for the Arts, Grand Tier III,  
Thursday, April 22, 2010**



Jean Kellogg, Charles Williams

Wayne Jennings



Wayne Jennings, Jean Kellogg, Charles Williams



John DeVoll, Joyce DeVoll, Linda Gersten



Friends enjoying light fare before the program

# The Mason Inn Epicurean Experience



Mason Inn

A culinary experience that will delight in every respect awaits when you dine in the Mason Inn. Managed by Aramark Conference Centers, the Inn is scheduled to open in July 2010, and the dining areas will open to the public on July 22, 2010. The Executive Chef, Marc Geis, who will manage a kitchen staff of 20, will be in charge of creating menus and preparing gourmet meals for conferences and meetings during the week as well as for weekend social events. Food and Beverage Director, Andrew Saba, is excited about Marc. "Marc worked in London for the BBC after obtaining his degree in Culinary Science from Hounslow College," said Andrew. "He also worked for 3 months as the Executive Chef for the Beijing Olympics in 2008, where he prepared a host of international dishes with a staff of 60 Chinese cooks and one translator."

Andrew, and Vicki Galindo, the Director of Sales and Marketing, described the process that was used to select Marc. Applicants went through a phone screening, a personal interview, a technical interview with the corporate chef, and lastly a "cook-off." The plan for the latter was to furnish the top candidates with a market basket of unknown food products to test their skills in butchering, creating a menu, preparing the food, and serving it within a 2-hour time frame. A panel of 5 judges was looking for flair and inventiveness, creativity, currency with the latest food trends, skills in preparing a variety of vegetable, meat, and fish dishes, and skill in presenting the dishes. Marc was the first applicant for the cook-off. He prepared a salad and two main courses: a Mediterranean sea bass with risotto, and stuffed chicken with pasta. "The contest was over immediately as Marc presented a fabulous meal within the time limit and completely won over the judges," noted Andrew.

Both Andrew and Vicki are very conscious of the sustainability of the Inn. They envision a potential of using local vendors to showcase their products. There will also be a Chef's Garden next to the Inn where various herbs will be grown – a "from the earth to the table feature," added Andrew. The restaurant itself will feature huge windows with

lots of natural light. There will be a patio for outdoor dining. The kitchen, which can handle banquets for up to 1000 people, is complete with state-of-the-art food preparation and storage equipment. The bar, constructed

with a library motif, will feature a wine list that has broad appeal, including Virginia wines and organic wines.

The dining area will feature two unusual and exciting experiences. There will be a "Chef's Table," which is a space in the kitchen where guests can eat gourmet meals created at the Chef's discretion, along with individual wine pairings. Besides receiving the Chef's individual attention, guests will enjoy watching the activities in the kitchen. The other feature will be a Presidential Dining Room (private) for up to 10 people. Guests will select special dishes from a customized menu created by the Executive Chef. Wine pairings will also occur in this venue.

The restaurant and lounge will seat approximately 175 guests. The facility will offer Concert Hall patrons a first rate dining experience to complement and enhance the outstanding performances.



Salad presentation



Chef Geis presenting chicken entree



Mason Inn accommodations



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For more information  
please call 703-993-4188  
or visit <http://cfa.gmu.edu/friends/>

## GREAT PERFORMANCES AT MASON

### 2009-2010 FCFA OFFICERS

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**Judy Weltz**  
*Vice President for Events*

**Paulette Miller**  
*Vice President for  
Membership*

**Eloise Stinger**  
*Vice President for  
Communications*

**Gordon Canyock**  
*Secretary*

**A.J. Driscoll**  
*Budget Officer*

### FCFA NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

**Gordon Canyock**  
**Barbara Jacksier**  
**Eloise Stinger**  
**Jane Tombes**  
**Bob Warakomsky**

Saturday, June 12 at 8 pm  
Mark Morris Dance Group

*Thank you for a wonderful  
2009/2010 Great Performances at Mason Season!*

*See you this Fall!*