

A Great Holiday Season Gift

Here is a suggestion for a great gift this holiday season to a family member, a friend or a very special neighbour. Please consider a gift membership to FNACO. The membership will allow them to: attend FNACO dinners or buffet concerts; attend three or more free rehearsals of the National Arts Centre Orchestra; receive the Con Brio Newsletter; and more importantly join others in supporting our great orchestra and to assist financially young musicians in their aspirations to one day join an orchestra such as ours.

The price is right! Student membership fees are \$15/year; seniors \$35/year and below 65 \$40/year. We also offer two-year memberships for seniors at \$55. and under 65 for \$65. Please note that membership fees over \$20 are charitable donations and income tax deductible. Other donations from our members are also very welcome.

Membership can be obtained by going to our website <https://www.friendsofnaco.ca>. By tapping the membership tab you can follow the instructions under Gift Memberships **or** you can contact Madeleine Aubrey at membership@friendsofnaco.ca

The Board of the Friends of the NAC Orchestra wishes you a joyous, musical Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Danish Delight-- Embassy of Denmark Evening Lynne Mackay FNACO Member

A delightful and memorable evening was had by 40 FNACO members on October 12th at the Official Residence of the Embassy of Denmark. It was a night to remember. This Embassy Concert was only the third live event since pandemic restrictions began in early 2020. The long wait for a live event certainly added to the energy and excitement of the evening.

We were made comfortable by the efficient FNACO organizers and the warm hospitality of the Embassy staff. As we ascended the sweeping stairs to the residence, I was impressed by Her Excellency Ambassador Hanne Fugl Eskjaer's friendly and gracious demeanour. I noticed the beautiful piano behind her, and she mentioned that she studied piano as a child, and now her teen-age son enjoys playing the embassy's grand piano almost every day. We were surrounded by Danish and Canadian designs in the warm colours of maple and cedar natural wood and the floor-to-ceiling windows brought nature in and us out to a large wrap-around deck. Two red swivel chairs, reproductions of the famous Danish designer Arne Jacobsen's Egg Chair, providing a visual focus of colour and curve. They were perfect. A large stone fireplace at the end of the great room made for the ideal rustic focal point. My husband Tony and I truly enjoyed connecting with the Friends and hearing about their summer adventures, plans, and newfound interests. Our common connection being the love of music, support of young musicians and, of course attending live music.

Her Excellency introduced the Pianist Frederic Lacroix. Frederic is a world-class pianist who has commanded audiences worldwide as a soloist, chamber musician and collaborative pianist. He currently teaches at the University of Ottawa. What struck me was the ease with which he played even the most dramatic of pieces. The 45-minute program included a combination of famous composers: Edvard Grieg, Niels Gade, Per Norgard and was rounded out by Iman Habibi's works and a much-loved Beethoven composition, 'Moonlight Sonata.'

The attentive audience enjoyed a superb concert backlit by warm lighting, beautiful décor and exquisite hospitality. Post-concert, 'The Friends' reassembled in the great room to a parade of delicious Danish ramekins of cod morsels, spoons of chopped shrimp, small tortellini, and many other delectable foods. This, of course, was perfectly paired with a selection of wines.

We all appreciated attending this concert after such a long period of social distancing restrictions. The atmosphere was lively and full of laughter. Our appreciation is boundless to the host embassy Denmark and Ambassador Hanne Fugl Eskjaer. Her gracious hospitality and support for the education of aspiring musicians align with the very core of the Friends of the NAC Orchestra's mission.

Bravo and many thanks to Denmark in Canada !



(left) Denmark's Ambassador
H.E. Hanne Eskjaer, Pianist Frederic
Lacroix and FNACO President
Christine McLaughlin

A Word from Christine McLaughlin President of FNACO

I have noticed in my conversations with members over the years that there is some misunderstanding between the Friends donors and the NAC Foundation donors.

Friends of NACO support Ottawa area music students, the majority of whom have the final goal of becoming a professional musician with an orchestra such as ours.

The National Arts Centre Foundation is a different organization which raises funds to enrich the lives of Canadians right across Canada for artists and educators.

Unlike the NAC'S motto "Canada is our Stage" I would like to suggest our Friends of the NAC Orchestra's motto should be "Ottawa is our Stage".

www.friendsofnaco.ca



Autumn Time With Austria

Carol Lutes Racine Diplomatic Liaison FNACO

The early November air was warmed by brilliant sun as a small group of Friends of the NAC Orchestra, seated informally around the music room of the historic Rockcliffe residence of Austria in Canada, were treated to a concert of Mozart, Liszt and Beethoven, movingly performed by young Ottawa pianist Joseph (Joe) McDonald, with a Gershwin Prelude as a much appreciated encore.

A variation of the Friends 'Music to Dine For' evening format, the mid-day Music for Lunch Time in Austria was warmly hosted by Austria's Ambassador H.E. Sylvia Meier-Kajbic.

Guests dined on a distinctly Austrian four course menu which began with a savory meat appetizer platter, followed by Frittatensuppe, then a main course of baked salmon served with sautéed vegetables with a finale of Apfelstrudel enveloped in whipped cream-- all accompanied by a selection of appropriate Austrian wines.

Following lunch, the animated table conversation continued apace in the living room over digestifs. A truly memorable autumn Friends of NACO afternoon enjoyed with Austria in Canada, while furthering the goal of funding support by the Friends for the Orchestra's on-going music education programs.

Special thanks to Austria's Ambassador Sylvia Meier-Kajbic for her patronage in support of aspiring young musicians and music education.



Figure 1 Pianist Joseph McDonald and host, Austria's Ambassador H.E. Sylvia Meier-Kajbic



A Reminder

Friends of NACO no longer have a volunteer role in various events held at the NAC. This is now handled by the NAC Department of Volunteers and Visitor Experience. If you wish to apply for a volunteer position, preference is given to bi-lingual candidates. Please be prepared for an interview and a police record check. Contact Alain.Chauvain@nac-cna.ca

FNACO support the orchestra through donations to concerts such as the Kilpatrick Fund concert and to some of the Music department programmes.

We provide awards and grants to support young people's music programmes in the Ottawa area. As follows:

- University of Ottawa Distinguished Leadership award for music
- University of Carleton Distinguished Leadership award for music
- NAC Orchestra Bursary competition
- Young Strings Performers Foundation
- Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy
- Kiwanis Music Festival
- OrKidstra programme

For further details and winners of past awards please refer to our web site www.friendsofnaco.ca and the Autumn Con Brio 2022



Mozart's Requiem-- Is There Anything More Sublime?

Christine McLaughlin President of FNACO



How very fortunate we were on Nov 9th and 10th to hear this heart rending music conducted by no other than Bernard Labadie. To a full house we heard the choir of la Chapelle de Quebec accompanied by our NAC Orchestra plus soloists Jane Archibald, Alex Hetherington, Andrew Haji and Philippe Sly.

When the woodwinds begin those first opening bars one is drawn to heaven and the all familiar Introit. Within a few months of his commission to write the Requiem Mass Mozart was dead, leaving an unfinished work to several others to reach for his brilliance.

This is music at its height and how we have missed it. Yes, we can listen to it at home but how wonderful to be able to share our love of classical music together and especially for this Requiem.



Birthday Greetings to Maria Neil a member of FNACO.

She celebrated her 90th birthday in November.

CONGRATULATIONS MARIA!



Please contact Christine if you know of a member celebrating the nifty nineties.

CON BRIO

Christine McLaughlin Editor; Gisèle Lamontagne Translator; Carol Lutes Racine Coordinator; Juan Molina and Jim Burgess web masters
Christine McLaughlin Rédactrice; Gisèle Lamontagne Traductrice; Carol Lutes Racine Coordinatrice; Juan Molina et Jim Burgess webmestres