



NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE
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For immediate release

MEDIA ADVISORY

Over 250 deserving youth to attend Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala in "Inspiration Seats," thanks to McDonald's Restaurants of Canada

Fairy Godmothers to provide evening wear for 10 lucky young women

OTTAWA—The National Arts Centre is delighted to announce that 250 deserving young people from the National Capital Region will attend the 20th Anniversary Gala of the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards on Saturday, May 5 at 8 p.m., thanks to McDonald's Restaurants of Canada.

A sponsor of the GGPAA Gala for five years, McDonald's Restaurants of Canada will transform the Southam Hall Balcony into "Inspiration Seats" so that young people who would not otherwise have the opportunity to attend the Gala can experience the inspirational power of the performing arts first-hand. The Awards represent Canada's highest honour in the performing arts, and the Gala is a star-studded event with heartfelt tributes and incredible performances that celebrate the extraordinary achievements of eight Canadian artists.

In addition, 10 young women from The Boys and Girls Club will be fitted with evening dresses for the GGPAA Gala from Fairy Godmothers, a non-profit organization that provides new and almost-new formal dresses, shoes and accessories free of charge to Ottawa area high school students who are unable to purchase them on their own.

Media are invited to the dress fitting this evening.

Where: Brown's Cleaners, 270 City Centre Avenue (off Wellington near Preston)

When: 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 2, 2012

Who: Representatives from Fairy Godmothers, the NAC and the Boys and Girls Club will be available for interviews.

“The future of the performing arts in Canada depends on the young people of today,” said John Betts, President & CEO, McDonald’s Restaurants of Canada Limited. “I am sure the Governor Generals Performing Arts Awards Gala will create opportunities for discovery and learning about the performing arts for these young people, not to mention it being a really terrific show!”

“We are so grateful to McDonald’s for this generous gift that will help us share the transformative power of the performing arts with hundreds of young people,” said NAC Foundation CEO Jayne Watson. “The Gala, which celebrates the lifetime achievement of Canada’s performing artists, will be inspiring to all of us, but particularly to our Canadian youth.”

In order to fill the seats with deserving youth, the NAC partnered with schools and youth-service programs in the community, including: Pathways to Education, Canterbury High School, Child and Youth Friendly Ottawa, De La Salle High School, Equal Voice, SEVEC, Youth Net, Ottawa Youth Orchestra, Algonquin College, Ottawa Regional Youth Choir, University of Ottawa Theatre and Visual Arts Departments, Ten Oaks Project, Youth Net, Ottawa Youth Orchestra, Algonquin College, The Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters and The Cappies.

Created in 1992, the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards are Canada’s highest honour for the performing arts. This year’s laureates for Lifetime Artistic Achievement are **Janina Fialkowska, Paul-André Fortier, Denis Marleau, Deepa Mehta, Rush** and **Mary Walsh**. Two other distinguished national awards are also conferred each year as complements to the GGPAF for lifetime artistic achievement. This year **Earlaine Collins** will receive the Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts, while **Des McAnuff** is the recipient of the National Arts Centre Award, which recognizes exceptional achievement over the past performance year.

The National Arts Centre is proud to produce the 2012 Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Gala in partnership with the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Foundation and the National Film Board of Canada. The Awards are presented with the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The GGPAF gratefully acknowledges **Enbridge** as Presenting Sponsor of the GGPAF Gala. The GGPAF Gala is made possible in part by its many sponsors. In particular, the National Arts Centre Foundation would like to thank Associate Sponsors **McDonald’s Restaurants of Canada Ltd.** for their support of the Inspiration Seats youth section and **Manulife Financial** for its support as our Dinner Sponsor. This year’s Mentorship Program is supported by **The Keg Spirit Foundation**. National Partners are **Desjardins Group, Onex Corporation, Pratt & Whitney Canada** and **Weber Shandwick Worldwide**, and **The Printing House** is our official Print Sponsor. The GGPAF also acknowledges the significant contributions of Regional Partners **Cenovus Energy Inc., Cineplex Media, Cisco Systems Canada Inc., DREAM, Holt Renfrew, Invesco, The Keg Steakhouse & Bar, Kinnear Financial, Mastercard Canada Inc., MTS Allstream, Penn West Exploration, Rogers Communications Inc., The Alvin Segal Family Foundation, Shangri La Hotels,** and **VIA Rail Canada**. Impresario Partners include **Accenture Canada, Acciona,**

Aecon Group Inc., Aimia, The Banff Centre, Cement Association of Canada, KPMG LLP, Ledcor, Mark Motors of Ottawa Ltd., McMillan LLP, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and Trinity Development Group Inc. Additional in-kind support for the Awards is received from **Ecentricarts, Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP**, technology partner **IBM, Llama Communications, MacLaren McCann, The Royal Canadian Mint**, and media partners **National Post, The Ottawa Citizen, Le Droit, Clear Channel and the Hill Times and Embassy Magazine.** Grateful thanks also go to the GGPAAGala's National Committee of volunteers, led by Honorary Chair **The Hon. Hilary M. Weston, CM, O.Ont.** of Toronto; Co-Chairs **Susan Glass** and **Arni Thorsteinson** of Winnipeg; Past Chairs **M. Ann McCaig, CM, AOE, LLD**, and **James S. Kinnear** of Calgary; and all the individuals and families whose philanthropic support helps make these awards possible.

Tickets for the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala on Saturday, May 5, 2012 are available at the NAC Box Office and through Ticketmaster, 1-888-991-2787 or at www.ticketmaster.ca.

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