

OPAS 2007-08
Our First Season in Review

MARVELOUS: Marvin Hamlisch

When Mercer and Gaby Reynolds welcomed Grammy and Tony Award-winning composer and performer Marvin Hamlisch to Sandy Creek Barn in summer 2007, they were announcing two things: the exciting formation of OPAS, and an absolutely incomparable degree of quality in the performing arts that would touch the region in the years to come.

The first evidence of that was Hamlisch himself, who set the standard for OPAS during three intimate concerts for more than 400 guests on April 10, July 5 and July 6. The affable and engaging star performed Broadway favorites like *A Chorus Line*'s "One," and enchanted guests with personal anecdotes, helping kick off the OPAS Circles Level Memberships. If OPAS found its roots that summer, it also found a champion. Hamlisch, together with celebrated Broadway stars J. Mark McVey, Debbie Gravitte and Jodie Benson, who performed alongside the legendary composer, announced their support for the fledgling organization—and established an unprecedented caliber of performance that would become the OPAS hallmark.



Dear OPAS Supporters,

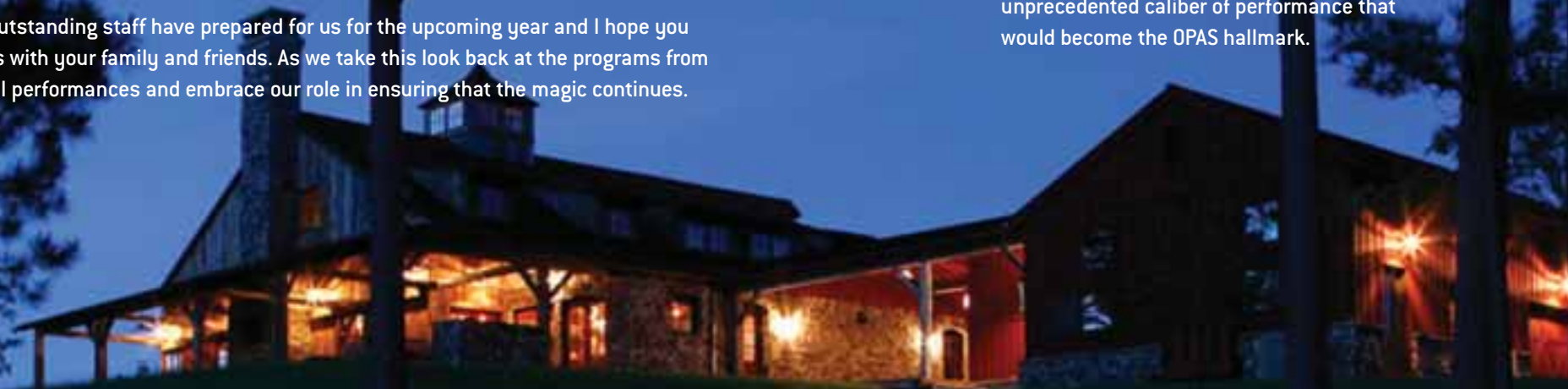
As I reflect on the first year of the Oconee Performing Arts Society, I am amazed at what we have accomplished – bringing stellar performers and performances to Lake Oconee and sharing the performing arts with local students. So often grandiose dreams fall short, but I believe with OPAS we surpassed even our most hopeful expectations. You have joined in that dream and together, we are making it come true, as witnessed by the thunderous applause that has concluded each of these amazing performances.

Included in OPAS's first annual report, you will meet the talented artists and some of the dedicated volunteers and staff who, under the leadership of Executive Director Roman Terleckyj, have made OPAS's first year of programs and arts education such a success.



I look forward to all Roman and his outstanding staff have prepared for us for the upcoming year and I hope you will share many of these experiences with your family and friends. As we take this look back at the programs from 2008, let us remember these magical performances and embrace our role in ensuring that the magic continues.

Sincerely,
Mercer Reynolds
Chairman





New Orleans Jazz is a raucous good time, with a syncopated strut, uncomplicated melody and bright thrill of improvisation at its heart. The Preservation Hall Jazz Band brought that joyful sound to Greensboro on October 17, 2007, transporting concertgoers to the French Quarter with a rousing performance at Harbor Club's outdoor Polo Arena.

Led by trumpeter John Brunious, the seven-piece band sallied through favorites like "When the Saints Go Marching In," bringing the 600-strong crowd to its feet for a handkerchief-waving second-line parade. The New Orleans "come one, come all" spirit endured even after the performance ended, with revelers spilling into the Harbor Club clubhouse for a reception with the musicians and kick-off of the OPAS Guild Level Memberships—graciously made possible by the Harbor Club and Cuscowilla communities, whom we thank for their support.



Introducing: The Figaro Society

The engine of the Oconee Performing Arts Society is fueled by a dedicated and spirited group of volunteers who happily donate their time and talent to help bring our performances to life. These energetic souls comprise the Figaro Society, so named for the quintessential "get-it-done" character himself, famous for his ingenuity, enthusiasm and pluck.

The October 2007 Preservation Hall Jazz Band concert provided the first backdrop for their volunteerism, and the joyous musical celebration that ensued was evidence of their hard work. We at OPAS are indebted to each and every volunteer in the Figaro Society, to which we extend an operatic *Bravo!*





The December 2007 production of Gian Carlo Menotti's *Amahl & The Night Visitors* marked a special achievement for OPAS. The first performance open to the public, it set the benchmark for performing arts in the community, showcasing a breathtaking quality in talent—cast members included Metropolitan Opera baritone Frederick Burchinal, soprano Monica Murphy and precocious 11-year-old Marcello Marsalli—and in production.

Sponsored by George and Char Edwards, *Amahl* also highlighted a joint success for OPAS and the community: produced in collaboration with the Athena Grand Opera and University of Georgia Hugh Hodgson School of Music, it was shared with more than 650 delighted audience members at Greensboro's Sandy Creek Barn and at Athens' Classic Center. An instant classic when first broadcast on national television in December 1951, *Amahl & The Night Visitors* is poised to become a treasured holiday tradition for the community.

The Spirit of Amahl: OPAS Educational Outreach Begins

OPAS has the obligation and the opportunity to expand the cultural world of the community's children and adults by presenting the best in the performing arts. The story of a poor, crippled child who meets the Three Magi one evening and goes on to experience a miracle, *Amahl & The Night Visitors* was a fitting backdrop for OPAS's first educational outreach opportunity. On December 6, a theater full of excited Greene County Elementary School students arrived at Sandy Creek Barn—and were promptly transported to Amahl's magical world during a full dress rehearsal of the opera, where they met the cast and crew.

It was the centerpiece of a full-fledged outreach program, led by OPAS Outreach Education Coordinator Elaine Cinnamon and Artistic Administrator Gary Arnold. Prior to the performance, area schools received a 35-page educational *Amahl* kit with CDs and DVDs, which were incorporated into lesson plans and workshops.





Returning to a genteel era, OPAS hosted six High Teas for ladies during February and April 2008. The backdrop was Greensboro's Weaver House, whose gracious rooms recall a time when the arts were a diversion best enjoyed in intimate drawing rooms and parlors. Metropolitan Opera audition finalist Monica Murphy made the afternoons especially evocative with her performances of operatic, jazz and Broadway musical arrangements encouraging the more than 350 collective guests to be patrons of the arts—and members of OPAS.

The Voice of Inspiration: Monica Murphy Visits Area Schools

The OPAS pledge to be a consistent presence in the lives of area students found a voice throughout 2008, when soprano Monica Murphy took to local schools with OPAS Artistic Administrator and pianist Gary Arnold. Together, they visited Greene and Putnam County Public Schools, Eatonton's Redeemer Episcopal Academy, Greensboro's Lake Oconee Academy and Nathanael Greene Academy, where they captured the students' imaginations through song. The pair performed arrangements from old spirituals and gospel to opera, jazz and Walt Disney show tunes, ending each visit with a candid Q & A session that provided the students with a bird's eye view into the world of the performing arts.





March 14, 2008 was an exceptional day for OPAS and the community, with two events that helped solidify the area as a home for the performing arts: the opening of Eatonton's newly-renovated Plaza Arts Center and its incredible inaugural performance by The 5 Browns, a family of virtuosos who astound with complex, simultaneous five-piano performances.



Exclusive Steinway Artists Ryan, Melody, Gregory, Deondra and Desirae have been a musical sensation since 2002, with appearances on *Oprah*, *NPR* and *60 Minutes*, and three CDs propelling them to the top of the classical music charts. Their sold-out, 500-seat OPAS performance, sponsored by Mercer and Gaby Reynolds, highlighted their breathtaking range, with atmospheric ensemble pieces and piquant solos from Rachmaninoff to W.C. Handy.



5 Times the Inspiration

The 5 Browns made history when they all attended Juilliard at once, and they have been inspiring students of all ages ever since.

Greene and Putnam County students got a chance to see why, when the young quintet hosted a special performance and Q & A for them on March 14, 2008.

Addressing the kids with their usual blend of showmanship and warmth, The 5 Browns shared insights about composition, explained the history behind the songs and talked about the performing life—granting wide-eyed students an accessible new view into classical music.

The performance also marked the beginning of another component to OPAS's education outreach: a brilliant collaboration with Putnam Entertainment Technology (PET), a division of Putnam County High School. The PET students, led by teacher J.R. Beckwith, helped produce the sold-out show. Today, the crew continues to provide behind-the-scenes assistance for a number of OPAS productions, helping deepen their understanding of all facets of the performing arts.



A Scholarship for Stevonna

The OPAS educational outreach program opened horizons by opening the doors to *Amahl & The Night Visitors* for area children in December 2007.

Unbeknownst to audience member Stevonna Greene, it would also throw open a door into a brighter musical future. It was the night the Greensboro Elementary sixth grader met lead soprano Monica Murphy, who became enchanted with Stevonna's burgeoning vocal talent and brought her to the attention of OPAS Education Outreach Coordinator Elaine Cinnamon. Working with Greensboro Elementary School staff and teacher Melony Greene, OPAS was proud to present its first-ever scholarship to Stevonna in May 2008, enabling the gifted young singer to attend the University of Georgia School of Music Summer Camp, June 1-6, 2008.

Men's Event Focuses on Festival Hall

Downtown Greensboro, GA is a fascinating source of history, with personal stories and community lore often reflected in the bricks and mortar of the buildings themselves. For a group of men from Reynolds Plantation, one building in particular captured their imaginations: Festival Hall. Formerly the Greensboro Auditorium, the historic building constructed in 1939 as part of the WPA—Works Progress Administration—and located next door to the Greensboro Courthouse, came alive in story and pictures during a special event last year. Organized by Dick O'Toole, the event offered the attendant listeners an anecdotal journey through Greensboro and Greene County, given by Ted Duvall. The event granted the men an understanding and appreciation of one of the area's oldest buildings, soon to reopen as a home for the arts—and once again take its place as a centerpiece of the community.



Tony Award-winning Donna McKechnie is an internationally-renowned Broadway veteran who epitomizes the ultimate leading lady. The multi-faceted McKechnie has sung and danced on the concert stage, on the screen, in cabarets and symphony orchestras. On April 11-12, 2008, McKechnie brought her gutsy mix of talent and technique to the Lake Country, performing in a pair of cabaret-style shows sponsored by Greg and Anna Lawton and Rick and Julie von Haam.

Her enormous voice warmed the intimate space at The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Reynolds Plantation, on tap for "Gypsy in my Soul," "The Girl of the Minute," and songs from musicals like "Bye Bye Birdie," "A Chorus Line," "Gypsy," and "Promises, Promises." Together with award-winning musical director Ian Herman, McKechnie provided an unforgettable evening.



American Made: Oak Ridge Boys in Concert



The warm evening air was the introduction to a perfect summer night in the south—the proper way to welcome The Oak Ridge Boys back to Georgia. On May 30, 2008, the group stopped in on their way to the Grand Ole Opry to share a country music sound long celebrated since the group's founding in Oak Ridge, TN in 1943—a sound that went on to win numerous gold, platinum and double-platinum albums and scores of No. 1 singles and Top 10 hits.

That upbeat, uplifting four-part harmony style sweetened the evening air at Harbor Club's Polo Arena, with Richard Sterban, Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall and Willie Lee Golden taking the cheering crowd of 1,200+ through a two-hour set that spanned the history of the group. During the concert, sponsored by Lake Country – Sotheby's International Realty, the Oak Ridge Boys showed why their trademark close-harmony sound on songs like "Bobby Sue," "American Made," and the legendary "Elvira" have been anchoring the roots of country music for better than 50 years.



Iconoclastic Advertising: Hatch Show Prints at Harbor Club



"Advertising without posters is like fishing without worms." Thus goes an early slogan of the Nashville, TN-based Hatch Show Print Company, the legendary printer whose 19th-century typography, woodblock letterpress method, and simple design were behind some of the music industry's most memorable concert promotions. Iconoclastic and authentic, the Hatch posters became vital to the industry and to the image of country music in particular.

To promote the 2008 Oak Ridge Boys concert and share the unique heritage of the company itself, OPAS presented a special exhibit of Hatch Show Prints in conjunction with the concert on May 30. Hosted at the Saddle Club, the exhibit displayed a limited run of custom Oak Ridge Boys posters along with the best of Hatch Show Prints. The company was founded by Charles R. and Herbert H. Hatch in Nashville in 1879 and is now operated by the Country Music Foundation.





The Independence Day celebration at The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Reynolds Plantation has long been a summer tradition for the families of Georgia's Lake Country. On July 5th, 2008, the celebration took on an exciting new cast, with The Atlanta Pops Orchestra, critically-acclaimed Broadway veteran Brian Stokes Mitchell and country music star and Grammy-winner Lari White making the evening memorable for more than 2,000 attendees.

The event, sponsored by Choo Choo Build-It Mart and Miller-Brown Family Companies, marked another special anniversary—it was exactly a year to the day Marvin Hamlich helped announce the formation of OPAS. Exemplifying the level of quality in performance OPAS has always embodied, the orchestra, conducted by Jason D. Altieri, led Stokes Mitchell and White through an exhilarating hour-and-15-minute set, capped off with a duet of the National Anthem and a spectacular fireworks extravaganza.

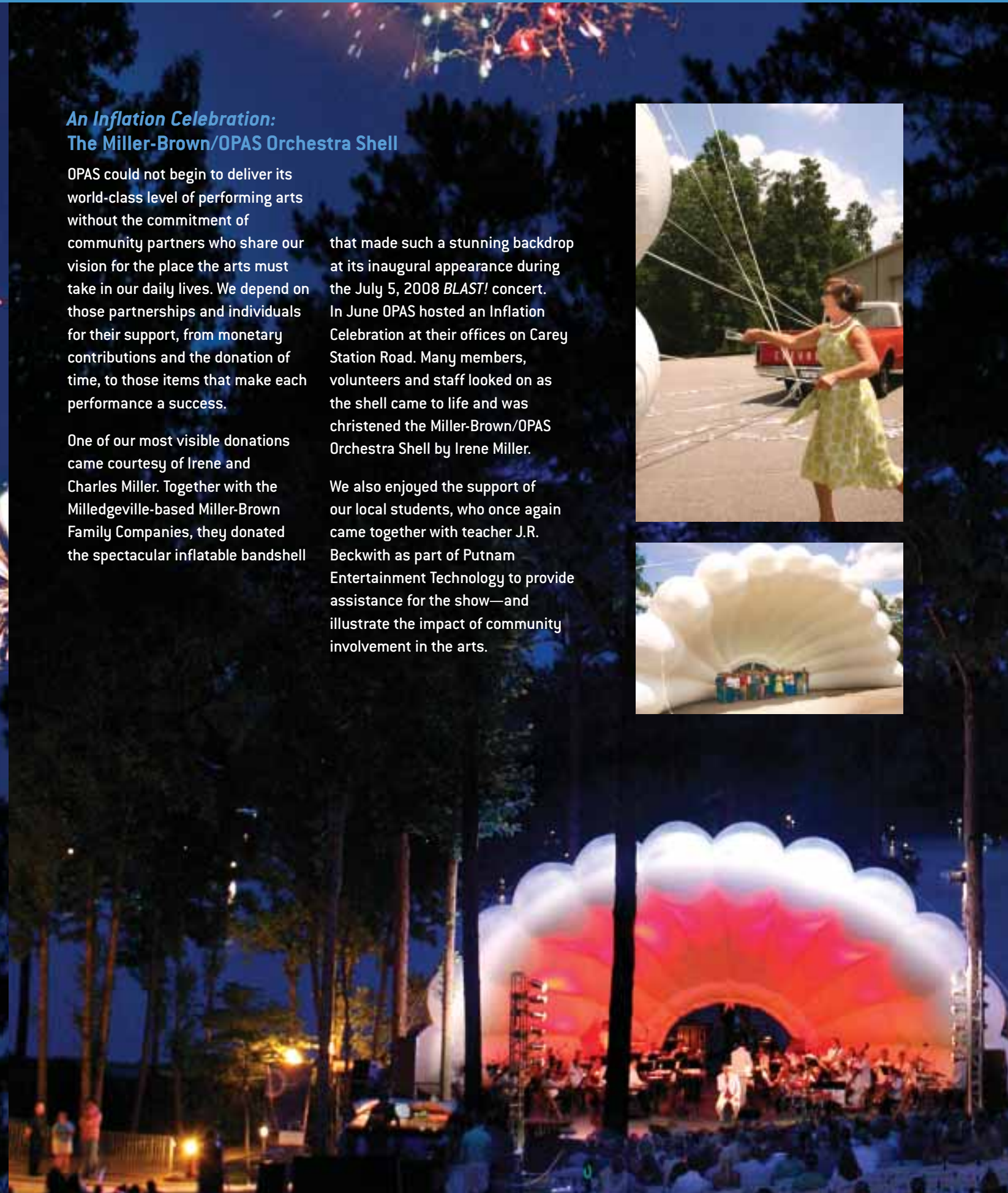
An Inflation Celebration: The Miller-Brown/OPAS Orchestra Shell

OPAS could not begin to deliver its world-class level of performing arts without the commitment of community partners who share our vision for the place the arts must take in our daily lives. We depend on those partnerships and individuals for their support, from monetary contributions and the donation of time, to those items that make each performance a success.

One of our most visible donations came courtesy of Irene and Charles Miller. Together with the Milledgeville-based Miller-Brown Family Companies, they donated the spectacular inflatable bandshell

that made such a stunning backdrop at its inaugural appearance during the July 5, 2008 *BLAST!* concert. In June OPAS hosted an Inflation Celebration at their offices on Carey Station Road. Many members, volunteers and staff looked on as the shell came to life and was christened the Miller-Brown/OPAS Orchestra Shell by Irene Miller.

We also enjoyed the support of our local students, who once again came together with teacher J.R. Beckwith as part of Putnam Entertainment Technology to provide assistance for the show—and illustrate the impact of community involvement in the arts.



Three Full Nights: Penny Fuller Comes to Greensboro

At times both energetic and sweetly poignant, the voice of Penny Fuller wafted through the intimate spaces at Greensboro's historic Weaver House this past October, delighting more than 250 guests who had gathered to hear the Broadway actress sing. A well-known television and stage performer, Fuller had personality to spare during the three-night, cabaret-style show, which included classic show tunes like "Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans," and "Tomorrow."

By day, Fuller and pianist Bruce Barnes enchanted the students of Greene and Putnam Counties with a new OPAS friend: OPIE, or OPAS Partners in Education, whose

cheerful, cap-wearing mascot marks a new, fun focus for the educational outreach program. With a set of well-known Broadway musical pieces and giggly, impromptu sing-a-longs, Fuller and Barnes engaged students with the kind of fun, interactive cultural education OPIE aims to make available to all children.



OPAS Partners with the Madison-Morgan Cultural Center

OPAS was pleased to sponsor internationally acclaimed pianist, Andreas Haefliger, as part of the 2008 Madison Chamber Music Festival. The concert "Haefliger Nacht" presented by the Madison-Morgan Cultural Center was held on June 16 in the cultural center's auditorium. Mr. Haefliger performed music of the Germanic traditions which included Brahms' *Piano Quintet in F minor* to a packed house. OPAS will continue to build on these relationships with other existing organizations throughout the area in 2009.



Ciao, Béla! Abigail Washburn & The Sparrow Quartet, Featuring Béla Fleck



Called “the premiere banjo player in the world,” Béla Fleck has appeared with the likes of Dave Mathews, Sting and the Grateful Dead, playing for audiences world-wide each year with the Flecktones. On October 18, 2008, the Grammy Award winner took the stage with Abigail Washburn & the Sparrow Quartet for a concert at Eatonton’s Plaza Arts Center, sponsored by

Blasingame, Burch, Garrard, & Ashley, PC. Along with cellist Ben Sollee and fiddler Casey Driessen, Fleck and Washburn mesmerized the nearly sold-out crowd with a bluegrass and folk repertoire.

The performers also wowed Greene and Putnam county students with their “unprecedented combination” of banjo, cello and five-string fiddle during a special presentation held the afternoon before the show, which the Putnam Entertainment Technology students once again helped produce. Part of the OPAS Education Outreach program, the musicians met with students at The Plaza Arts Center to share stories of their worldwide travels and the music that has made them a string-playing sensation.



The penultimate event of 2008, the November 9 matinee performance of The Washington Ballet was a triumph for OPAS. Hailed as “exhilarating” by *The Washington Post* and “impressive” by the *New York Times*, the world-renowned ballet company generated more superlatives from the 400+ member audience who gathered at The Plaza Arts Center for a breathtaking repertoire that included excerpts from Twyla Tharp’s “Baker’s Dozen” and Spanish choreographer Nacho Duato’s “Cor Perdut.”

The Washington Ballet also helped the audience welcome the holiday season with selections from Washington Ballet Artistic Director Septime Webre’s “The Nutcracker”—a vintage take on the world’s most well-known ballet. Along with “Rubies,” from George Balanchine’s contemporary ballet, “Jewels,” the performance, sponsored by John and Debbie Griswold, also intrigued the audience with a preview of Webre’s “Rocketman,” set to debut in 2009.



KidsGala: Students Experience the Washington Ballet

In conjunction with The Washington Ballet, OPAS was proud to produce kidsGala, an interactive and entertaining education performance, sponsored by The Peoples Bank, for students in Greene, Putnam and Morgan counties. An exciting behind-the-scenes look at ballet, the presentation included excerpts from the Company’s repertoire, along with

More than 1,100 students—representing every school in Greene and Putnam counties—attended the workshop, led by Artistic Director Septime Webre. There, the students learned how to find inspiration, express ideas in movement and organize phrases into a short piece. Students also enjoyed excerpts from Webre’s “The Nutcracker,” along with an intriguing snapshot of men’s technique and women’s pointe work that demonstrated the intense athleticism of The Washington Ballet dancers.

Make a Ballet, in which the students took to the stage of The Plaza Arts Center in Eatonton to see the ballet from a choreographer’s perspective.



Multi-faceted and fun, “Fa-La-La, Phantom & Friends – A Holiday Celebration of Broadway,” sponsored by Lee and Carol Arberg and Dick and Wendy O’Toole, was a jewel of an event. Showcasing some of the industry’s most celebrated performers, the December 14 production at The Ritz-Carlton Lodge brought together Broadway voices Brent Barrett, Debbie Gravitte, J. Mark McVey, and Lisa Vroman; Metropolitan Opera Bass/Baritone Jeffrey Wells; Grammy winner Lari White; The Atlanta Pops Orchestra, led by Music Director John Head and guest conductor Scot Woolley; and Broadway Choreographer and Director Baayork Lee.

Performances like Debbie Gravitte’s “Memory,” from *CATS*, J. Mark McVey’s rendition of *Les Miserables*’ “Bring Him Home,” and The Atlanta Pops Orchestra’s “Sleigh Ride in Vienna,” provided heart-warming contrasts to fun pieces like Lari White’s “Santa Baby,” which brought the 500-member audience to its feet. This incredible performance drew an overwhelmingly positive response as a fantastic way to usher in the holiday season—and put an emphatic exclamation point on a year’s worth of high-caliber performances.



Fa-La-La Education & Outreach with Lari White!

“Fa-La-La, Phantom & Friends” cast member Lari White is an eclectic performer whose diverse roots in country, pop and gospel music have earned her a number of monikers, from Renaissance Woman to Grammy Winner. In December 2008, she earned a new one, as friend to a number of Greene and Putnam county students whom she visited during her OPAS educational outreach program. There, White engaged students with a heartfelt and open discussion about the opportunity for careers in the arts, from



musicians, songwriters and producers, to costume designers, stage managers and sound engineers. She told personal stories about her musical influences and how she shares music with her own children. This final 2008 education outreach effort further demonstrates the OPAS vision of bringing the arts to children, helping them understand that, through the arts, *they too* might change the way others experience the world.

A Seasoned Performer: Jeffrey Wells @ PLC Luncheon!

Jeffrey Wells is an international opera star and principal artist with the Metropolitan Opera. He has appeared with every major U.S. opera company, and has shared the stage with luminaries such as Luciano Pavarotti and Placido Domingo. On December 17, this seasoned performer—and soloist for “Fa-La-La, Phantom & Friends”—brought his inspirational talent to the Plantation Ladies Club Annual Holiday Brunch. Singing in an intimate space at The Lake Club, Wells delighted the crowd with selections including “Old Man River,” “O, What a Beautiful Morning,” “The Christmas Song,” “Let There Be Peace on Earth,” and the prominent bass solo from Verdi’s opera, “Macbeth.” Well-known for his magnificent voice and superb musical artistry, Wells drew the largest number of guests ever to this annual event.

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We wish to recognize and thank the following individuals and corporations for their generous support. It is because of this generous support that OPAS has been able to produce a season of outstanding entertainment. Performances such as these have the power to stir the imagination as they define artistic greatness – a hallmark of all OPAS performances.

We appreciate every gift to OPAS and those in support of the renovation of Festival Hall. Listed here are donors who made their commitment to us by December 31, 2008. We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list. Please let us know of any omissions or errors. As a patron of the arts you already belong to an exceptional group of people. If you have not already done so, we invite you to join others who share your love of the arts through membership in OPAS. For information please contact us at 706-467-6000.

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Oconee Construction Services, LLC
Pittman Construction Company

The Farmers Bank
Margie & Chuck Forbes
Frazier Copelan Family: LaVerne, Beth, Nancy, & Carolyn
Georgia Classic Cruisers
Greene County Sheriff's Department

GUILDS

DIAMOND
Southern Directory Publishing
PLATINUM
The Berger Company
FB Interiors and Design, LLC

Greensboro Business Association
Greensboro Elementary
Greensboro Jewelers
Helen J. Hall
Jim & Phyllis Higdon
Lake Oconee Community Bank
Lake Oconee Outfitters

GOLD
Century 21 Minchey Properties
Classic Wines
Horton Vans, Inc.
Maybe Ortiz Photography

Linger Longer Communities
Little Greene Theatre Company
John & Nan McGarity
Phil & Jeanelle Mellor
NIBCO, INC.
Novelis, Inc.
OneGeorgia Grant

SILVER
Askew Appliance
Georgian Press
Hidden Treasures
BRONZE
Georgia Housing Center
Keating Brothers Construction Company

C.L. "Mutt" & Jane Rhodes
Lee & Cathy Rhodes
Rotary Club of Greene and Putnam Counties
Gene & Charlton Veazey, Sr.

Our Inaugural Season!

We thank all who gave of themselves, and all those who attended, and we look forward to another exciting season with you.

April 10, 2007
**Marvin Hamlisch
with Mark McVey**
Sandy Creek Barn, Greensboro

July 5, 2007
**Marvin Hamlisch
with Debbie Gravitte**
Sandy Creek Barn, Greensboro

July 6, 2007
**Marvin Hamlisch
with Jodi Benson**
Sandy Creek Barn, Greensboro

October 17, 2007
Preservation Hall Jazz Band
Harbor Club Polo Arena, Greensboro

December 7-9, 2007
Amahl & the Night Visitors
Sandy Creek Barn, Greensboro

December 22, 2007
Amahl & the Night Visitors
The Classic Center, Athens

February 27-29, 2008
High Tea with Monica Murphy
The Weaver House, Greensboro

March 14, 2008
The 5 Browns
The Plaza Arts Center, Eatonton

April 2-4, 2008
High Tea with Monica Murphy
The Weaver House, Greensboro

April 11-12, 2008
Donna McKechnie Cabaret
The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Greensboro

May 19, 2008
Men's Event
Festival Hall, Greensboro

May 29, 2008
Hatch Exhibit
Saddle Club @ The Harbor Club
Polo Arena, Greensboro

May 30, 2008
The Oak Ridge Boys
Harbor Club Polo Arena, Greensboro

June 16, 2008
**Madison Chamber Music
Festival's Haefliger Nacht**
Cultural Center Auditorium, Madison

July 5, 2008
BLAST!
The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Greensboro

September 16-18, 2008
**Dinner & Cabaret
with Penny Fuller**
The Weaver House, Greensboro

October 18, 2008
**Abigail Washburn
& the Sparrow Quartet**
The Plaza Arts Center, Eatonton

November 9, 2008
The Washington Ballet
The Plaza Arts Center, Eatonton

December 14, 2008
**Fa-La-La, Phantom & Friends
A Holiday Celebration
of Broadway**
The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Greensboro

STAFF
Roman Terleckyj – Executive Director
Gary Arnold – Artistic Administrator
Samantha Duthler – Company Manager
Mikel Gambuto – Technical Director
*Jordan Goodwater –
Development Assistant*
Judy Lewis – Director of Development
*Sherry Lovelace –
Administrative Assistant*
Hennesseylnk.com – Graphic Designer



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Roman Terleckyj – Executive Director