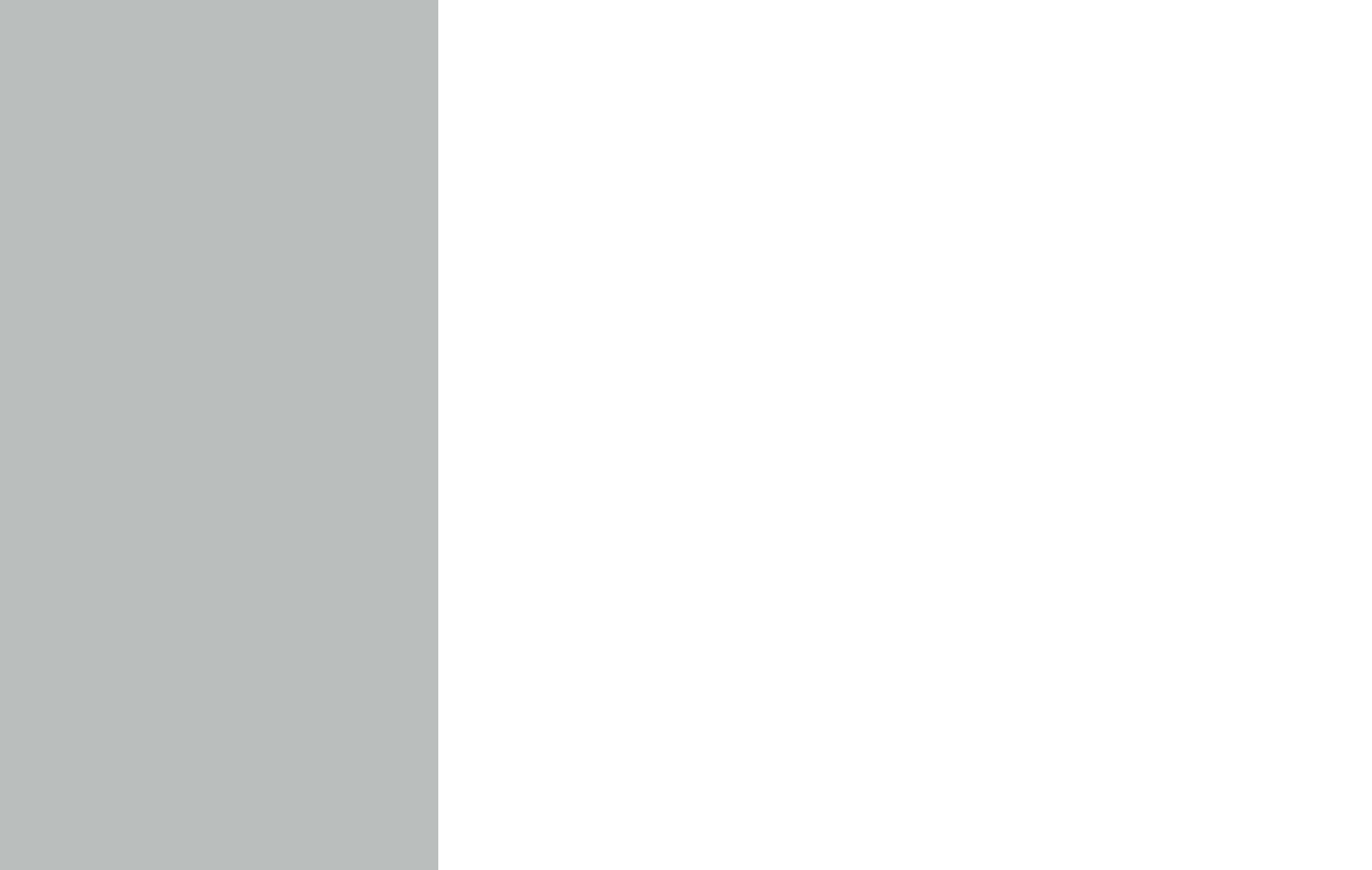




CANADA'S NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE

RESTORING THE VISION
2001-2006

SEPTEMBER 10, 2001



I. An Extraordinary Organization

The National Arts Centre opened its doors in 1969 – an extraordinary organization led by an extraordinary man. Hamilton Southam's passion for the performing arts helped guide the creation of the National Arts Centre and, as our first Director General, he infused the NAC's early years with his sense of excitement and his commitment to the arts.

The 1960s were a time of enormous creativity in Canada. The nation was celebrating a century of achievement, and Canadian artists and writers began to receive national recognition and international acclaim. As a symbol of Canada's new-found confidence, and as a national showcase for the very best in the performing arts, the federal government created the National Arts Centre as a centennial project for all Canadians.

It meant that the National Arts Centre was born through an act of will – and an Act of Parliament.

Our mandate was unique. We featured five performing arts disciplines: classical music, theatre, dance, opera and variety. We embraced the culture of Canada's two official languages. And, most importantly, we served as a catalyst for the performing arts nationally ... working with and supporting artists and arts organizations in communities across the country.

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was born through
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But in the decades
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the National Arts Centre
gradually drifted away
from the boldness
of that original vision.

The first ten years were heady times for the NAC. The National Arts Centre Orchestra was recognized as one of the finest in the country, earning rave reviews on its tours across Canada and abroad. The resident English and French theatre companies produced exciting, original work, and we presented the most innovative productions being created by regional theatres across the country. Our dance seasons featured the best in classical and contemporary dance from Canada and the world. We created a summer opera festival that won international applause. And all of this activity was supported by an exceptional group of technical and production staff – generally thought to be the best in the business.

II. Losing our Sense of Purpose

But in the decades that followed, the National Arts Centre began to drift away from the boldness of Hamilton Southam's original vision.

We became complacent. We stopped being a centre of creativity. And our program budgets began to shrink. Parliament gave us less money and, when faced with the choice of raising far more of our own revenue or making do with less, we had neither the instincts nor the skills to become more entrepreneurial. We began, instead, to compromise on artistic quality.

Orchestra tours were cut back. Original productions were scaled down. Resident theatre companies were disbanded. Resources to commission new dance works were slashed. The summer opera festival was abandoned. We stopped reaching out to younger audiences. We became less visionary, less creative, increasingly bureaucratic – the landlord of an aging performing arts facility on the banks of the Rideau Canal.

We gradually withdrew from much of our national role as well, and from our commitment to support artistic development across the country. But, ironically, we made only a modest effort to become part of the local arts community in the capital region.

With seven different CEOs in the 1990s, ongoing differences of opinion between senior management and the Board, and severe financial difficulties, the National Arts Centre began to flounder, and became increasingly unclear about its role.

The NAC had lost its sense of purpose ... and its sense of direction.

Today, everyone at the NAC is determined to restore a bold National Arts Centre vision for a new century.

III. A Commitment to Change

Today, everyone at the NAC – the Board of Trustees, the management and the employees – is determined to restore a bold National Arts Centre vision for a new century.

We start out with some major advantages.

We have a superb artistic leadership team in Pinchas Zukerman, Marti Maraden, Denis Marleau, Cathy Levy and Michel Dozois.

We have the dedication and commitment of the National Arts Centre's employees. Despite some of the turbulence and uncertainty they've experienced, our employees have never lost their belief in the importance of the performing arts. They infuse the National Arts Centre with their passion; and their dedication and creativity bring magic to our stages.

We have unusually loyal and knowledgeable audiences, who continue to have strong proprietary feelings about the work of the National Arts Centre.

And finally, we continue to have a national reputation with artists and arts organizations across the country. They recognize and appreciate the National Arts

Centre's historic support for the work of the performing arts in communities across Canada – in the development of new works, in showcasing our best artists, and in training the performing artists of tomorrow.

IV. A New Strategic Vision

The Board of Trustees and the management team began to work on a new strategic vision for the National Arts Centre in the spring of 2000.

They assessed the organization's mandate and history, looked at its successes and shortcomings, evaluated its strengths and weaknesses, and reached a clear understanding about the strategic goals, priorities and values that would shape the National Arts Centre over the next decade.

The Trustees and the senior staff were particularly committed to restoring the National Arts Centre as Canada's pre-eminent showcase for the performing arts, and to re-establishing the NAC's role as a catalyst for the performing arts nationally – nurturing and supporting artists and arts organizations in communities across the country.

We want to restore the National Arts Centre as Canada's pre-eminent showcase for the performing arts, and re-establish the NAC's role as a catalyst for the performing arts nationally – nurturing and supporting artists and arts organizations in communities across the country.

STRATEGIC GOALS:

1. Artistic expansion and innovation
2. Greater emphasis on the NAC's national role
3. Greater commitment to youth and educational activities
4. Dramatic increase in our earned revenues

V. Strategic Goals

As a result, they identified four major strategic goals that the National Arts Centre would pursue: a renewed focus on artistic expansion and innovation; a far greater emphasis on the NAC's national role; a greater commitment to our youth and educational activities; and a dramatic increase in our "earned revenues" initiatives ... allowing the NAC to use the additional revenues to fund most of our new programming and educational activities.

1. Artistic expansion and innovation

Our first goal is to put the emphasis ... and the excitement ... back on our stages. And that means re-establishing our track record and our reputation as a creative force in the Canadian performing arts.

It means that the NAC will return to "in-house" production ... and we will commission, develop and produce more new Canadian works; but we'll also expand the quality and quantity of our co-productions with other performing arts organizations across Canada.

At the same time, the National Arts Centre is strongly committed to becoming a leader and an innovator in each of the performing arts fields in which we work – a leader and innovator in classical music, English theatre, French theatre, dance and variety programming.

2. Greater emphasis on the NAC's national role

Since the National Arts Centre belongs to all Canadians, it's essential that the NAC reach out to Canadians in every part of the country ... and in both official languages. Our goal is to make a difference in the performing arts throughout Canada – by working with artists and arts organizations, and by bringing NAC performances to Canadians wherever they live.

By co-producing with arts organizations from coast to coast, we'll share creative and financial risks ... and foster artistic exchanges between different parts of the country. In addition, we'll encourage and support the best Canadian musicians, choreographers, performers and playwrights ... and give them national and international exposure. And we'll provide professional development opportunities for our best young conductors, musicians, actors and production staff.

We'll also devote a great deal more of our resources and energy to bringing NAC performances to audiences outside Ottawa. The National Arts Centre Orchestra



1. Kerry Lynn Turner in
The Faerie Queen,
a Ballet British Columbia/
National Arts Centre
co-production.

We want Canadians everywhere to feel that the National Arts Centre is their performing arts centre.



2. Peter Duschenes performs with elementary school students and the NAC Orchestra in *Rhythm in Your Rubbish*.

... and our English and French language theatres ... will return to annual touring. Our national radio and television broadcasts, webcasts and compact disc recordings will bring NAC performances into Canadian homes on a regular basis. And we're working creatively with the National Research Council to experiment with a number of new media and broadband applications to attract young Canadians to what we do.

We want Canadians everywhere to feel that the National Arts Centre is their performing arts centre.

3. Greater commitment to youth and educational activities

While the National Arts Centre has been involved in a range of youth and educational activities since it opened in 1969, the educational role has never been given a central focus in the organization.

This is no longer the case. The National Arts Centre is convinced that our youth and educational activities can make an enormous contribution to both the educational and cultural life of the country. Education will be part of our "core" activities in the years to come.

These educational activities will revolve around three broad themes: first, programs for young and emerging artists ... such as the NAC's Young Artists Program every summer, master classes and workshops, internship programs, National Arts Centre Orchestra Bursaries and the NAC/CBC Debut Concert Series; second, programs for young audiences, which introduce pre-schoolers and students to music, theatre and dance – both at the National Arts Centre and at their schools; and third, programs and study materials for teachers. This includes summer courses for teachers, teacher resource kits (such as *Introducing Beethoven*) distributed to all 12,500 elementary schools in the country, and an interactive, educational website for both teachers and students.

4. Dramatic increase in our "earned revenues"

The core of our new financial strategy is based on increasing our earned revenues dramatically over the next decade, and using those additional revenues to finance our artistic expansion and our educational initiatives.

This will require the National Arts Centre to become far more entrepreneurial and far more self-reliant. During our first twenty years, we relied predominantly on federal government funding, and supplemented these funds with box-office sales and several other sources of commercial revenue. Year by year, the NAC benefited from steady increases in its parliamentary appropriation.

We will increase our earned revenues dramatically over the next decade, and use those additional revenues to finance our artistic expansion and our educational initiatives.

In the 1990s, however, the federal government was forced to cut its spending severely. The National Arts Centre's funding was reduced by almost 24%, and the NAC responded by cutting back on its programming activities and compromising on artistic quality.

While parliamentary funding for the NAC has stabilized over the past few years, it's unrealistic to expect substantial increases from Parliament in the near future ... and much of our new artistic vision will have to be funded by earned revenues.

We define earned revenue as all non-parliamentary revenue, including fundraising. We now derive about half of our total revenue from seven business sources – the NAC box office, fundraising and sponsorships, the NAC catering business, the NAC restaurant, the NAC's commercial parking operation, facility rentals and new ventures. Our goal, by the year 2007, is to have earned revenue account for at least 60% of our total revenue. This very ambitious goal assumes overall revenue growth at 10% per year; stable government appropriations; and the development of a new entrepreneurial ethic at the National Arts Centre.



4. Tom Rooney, Wendy Noel
and Joyce Campion in
The Beauty Queen of Leenane
by Martin McDonagh.

VI. Priorities

We've defined a clear strategic direction that will restore the National Arts Centre as Canada's pre-eminent showcase for the performing arts ... and we'll re-establish the NAC's historic role as a supporting partner for the performing arts across the country.

We've identified the four strategic goals that provide a clear sense of where we want the organization to go.

And we've agreed on a set of priorities for the next five years that are essential to helping us get there:

1. Change our internal culture

For most of the past decade, the National Arts Centre's internal culture was one of our most significant barriers to success. We didn't value or focus enough on creativity; risk-taking and innovation were subtly discouraged; we weren't entrepreneurial enough; and we were too bureaucratic, too internally focused and too passive.

We've agreed on a set of priorities for the next five years that are essential to helping us reach our strategic goals.

We must become an organization that encourages and rewards creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial initiative, professionalism and results.

Today's more demanding environment calls for innovation, market savvy and boldness of vision and, as a result, we have to transform the way we work. We have to become an organization that encourages and rewards creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial initiative, professionalism and results.

2. Upgrade the professionalism of the organization

In order to restore the NAC as Canada's pre-eminent showcase for the performing arts, we'll need to compare or "benchmark" our artistic, managerial, revenue generation and technical skills against the very best arts organizations in North America on an ongoing basis; we'll need to recruit the most promising young professionals in the field from across the country; and we'll need to introduce high-level professional development and training opportunities for employees in every part of the organization.

3. Improve the quality of the management team

The process of revitalizing and transforming the National Arts Centre has to begin with its management team. The NAC must develop one of the leading management teams in the Canadian not-for-profit sector – not just in relation

to other performing arts organizations, but compared with the very best management teams in the university and hospital fields as well. This will require some senior-level recruiting, rigorous performance appraisal, compensation incentives, and a continuing emphasis on upgrading professional skills. The NAC's management team must be highly motivated, knowledgeable, creative, entrepreneurial and results-oriented.

4. Become a leader in each of the performing arts fields in which we work

The National Arts Centre works in classical music, English theatre, French theatre, dance, variety and community programming ... and we aspire to play a leadership role in each of these fields.

We hope to achieve that "standing" in the performing arts community because of the excellence of the NAC's artistic leadership team, the standards we set in all of our performances, our passion for developing new Canadian work, our commitment to annual touring, and our desire to support and work closely with other Canadian arts organizations.



4. National Arts Centre Orchestra,
Pinchas Zukerman, Music Director

The National Arts Centre works in classical music, English theatre, French theatre, dance, variety and community programming ... and we aspire to play a leadership role in each of these fields.



5. Master class with
Pinchas Zukerman,
Music Director,
National Arts Centre Orchestra

5. Develop strategic partnerships

In order to achieve our four major goals, we'll have to deepen and broaden our strategic relationships with other Canadian organizations. Strategic partnerships have the benefit of pooling resources and talent, taking advantage of niche areas of expertise, and creating far more market impact.

The NAC will pursue long-term strategic relationships with a number of performing arts organizations, but we believe that some of the most promising long-term partnerships will be formed with innovative organizations outside the performing arts – with broadcasters such as CBC and Radio-Canada; with arts training organizations such as The Banff Centre and the National Theatre School in Montréal; and with high-tech organizations such as the National Research Council.

6. Employ technology to reach a broader audience

The National Arts Centre has begun to move rapidly in adapting the next generation of Internet and broadband technology to the performing arts.

We're determined to play a pioneering role in this area by creating a virtual performing arts studio – the NAC Smart Studio; by using the Internet and broadband applications for master classes and workshops led by

Pinchas Zukerman; by creating a national arts and education website for teachers and students; and by moving aggressively in the E-business field for our marketing and development activities.

7. Sharpen the National Arts Centre's identity

As the NAC expands its national activities through touring, co-productions, radio and television, CD recordings, technology, professional development and youth and educational activities, we will begin to develop a clearer and sharper national identity.

We're determined to instill a clear "brand" image in the minds of the Canadian public – an arts organization that symbolizes the very best ... and the most creative ... in its field. And, an organization that's a real source of pride for Canadians.

8. Attract a younger audience

Although the National Arts Centre attracts a discriminating audience that is highly educated, knowledgeable, affluent, and passionate about music, theatre and dance, we've done relatively little over the years to attract younger people to the NAC.

We're determined to instill a clear "brand" image in the minds of the Canadian public – an arts organization that symbolizes the very best ... and the most creative ... in its field.

The new Foundation will work with donors across the country to support the NAC's activities.

Our recently created "Live Rush" program for high school, college and university students has, however, turned out to be a great success in getting young people to attend our programming; and we hope to make "Live Rush" available to performing arts organizations in other cities across Canada.

We're also determined to repeat the success of "Live Rush" by creating audience development programs for young single professionals and for young married couples. Both of these audience segments represent fertile ground for the National Arts Centre.

9. Establish a National Arts Centre Foundation to harness our fundraising efforts

We believe that the new National Arts Centre Foundation will become the NAC's biggest source of revenue growth over the next decade. We've recruited a highly experienced Executive Director to build a full-service development organization, and we're in the process of attracting a national Board of Directors for the Foundation.

The new Foundation will work with donors across the country to support the NAC's activities – through annual giving programs, major gifts from individuals and corporations, endowments, corporate sponsorships, bequests, special events, naming opportunities, and periodic, high-profile capital campaigns.

10. Enhance our marketing skills

We also believe that we can increase our earned revenues significantly by becoming better at marketing the new NAC. We need to become more sophisticated in our use of market data, research and technology. We need to develop a far stronger customer service ethos, and we need to use the Internet more for promotion, ticket sales and subscriptions.

We also have to become much more strategic in broadening our appeal to new audience segments – to recent college and university graduates; to young adults in the 25-to-40 year-old range; to francophone customers in both Eastern Ontario and the Province of Quebec; to minority communities in the National Capital Region; and to "cultural tourists" within a 500-kilometre radius. Both the Stratford and Shaw Festivals have had great success in developing cultural tourism.

11. Improve our relations with the National Capital Region

While we have a national mandate, we're proud to reside in the National Capital Region ... and we have to do more to be an active member of the local community.

The creation of a fourth stage – to showcase community programming – signalled an important change in the NAC's relationship with the region, and it was met with great enthusiasm by local officials, the media and arts organizations.

We're proud to reside in the National Capital Region ... and we have to do more to be an active member of the local community.



6. *Maita*, by Esther Beauchemin.

The Fourth Stage opened in January of 2001, and we've had full houses for almost every performance since the opening.

We also have to work closely with the major local arts organizations in the region – organizations such as Opera Lyra Ottawa, La Nouvelle Scène, the Great Canadian Theatre Company, the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, Le Théâtre de l'Île and the many excellent festivals that exist in the area.

And we have to do a lot more to invite the community into the National Arts Centre, whether it involves hosting regular open houses, or providing facilities for events that are important to the community. We want to be an important part of the life of this region.

12. Expand French language programs and initiatives

The National Arts Centre is located in a region that is about one-third francophone, but only about 11% of the audience for the NAC's regular programming is francophone. The francophone communities in Eastern Ontario and the Outaouais tend to see the National Arts Centre as a primarily anglophone institution.

We intend to change that situation, and we'll do that by expanding our French language variety, theatre and community programming activities, as well as broadening our French language youth and education initiatives.

We also have to develop closer ties between the NAC Orchestra and the francophone community; and we have to introduce new marketing and customer relations initiatives to make sure our francophone customers find the NAC sensitive to their needs.

13. Upgrade the National Arts Centre building and its facilities

The National Arts Centre building ... and its facilities ... are over thirty years old, and not surprisingly, they're in serious need of repair.

The NAC will use the long-term capital funding we've recently received from the federal government to upgrade both the building and our facilities. Over the next decade, we'll systematically enhance our performing spaces, and make much-needed repairs to major equipment such as our elevators, our heating and air-conditioning systems and our electrical operation.

And after many years of planning, we'll finally create the much-anticipated Elgin Street entrance. We'll improve the lighting, signage and accessibility at the NAC to make the building far more user-friendly for our patrons; and we'll construct an addition to the building to house a new rehearsal hall and office space for our programming departments.

We'll improve the lighting, signage and accessibility at the NAC to make the building far more user-friendly for our patrons.

We're determined to restore the original magic and excitement of this organization, and we believe that the National Arts Centre's best years are still ahead of us.

VII. Conclusion

The original vision that created the National Arts Centre was both bold and ambitious. It symbolized a period of enormous creativity ... and a surge of pride and optimism that swept Canada in the 1960s.

At the dawn of a new century, Canadians have a right to feel every bit as proud about their country's current achievements ... and particularly about the remarkable impact that our musicians, playwrights, actors and dancers are having on the world around them.

The National Arts Centre is also on the threshold of an exciting new era. We have exceptional artistic leadership, a talented and creative staff, a clear sense of purpose, and a tremendous sense of passion and optimism about the future of the NAC.

We're determined to restore the original magic and excitement of this organization, and we believe that the National Arts Centre's best years are still ahead of us.

Notes

1. Kerry Lynn Turner in *The Faerie Queen*, a Ballet British Columbia/National Arts Centre co-production choreographed by John Alleyne, February 2001. Photo: David Cooper.
2. Peter Duschenes performs with elementary school students and the NAC Orchestra in *Rhythm in Your Rubbish*, a theatrical symphony concert co-produced for school matinees by the National Arts Centre and Platypus Theatre, with an NAC-commissioned score by Patrick Cardy, April/May 2001. Photo: Couvrette/Ottawa.
3. Tom Rooney, Wendy Noel and Joyce Campion in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, by Martin McDonagh, directed by Glynis Leyshon. A National Arts Centre English Theatre/The Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company co-production, March 2001. Photo: Gordon King.
4. National Arts Centre Orchestra with Pinchas Zukerman, Music Director. Photo: Fred Cattroll.
5. Master class with Pinchas Zukerman, Music Director, National Arts Centre Orchestra. Photo: Byfield-Pitman Photography.
6. *Maita*, by Esther Beauchemin, directed by Robert Bellefeuille. A Théâtre de la Vieille 17 (Ottawa) and Théâtre de Sable (Québec) production, in co-production with the National Arts Centre French Theatre, October 2000. Photo: Louise Leblanc.

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NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE
CENTRE NATIONAL DES ARTS

Our Values

- The National Arts Centre will focus on creativity and artistic achievement.
- The National Arts Centre will symbolize excellence – we will strive to be the very best in the performing arts in Canada.
- The National Arts Centre will be audience-focused.
- The National Arts Centre will be outward-looking.
- The National Arts Centre employees will be highly trained and professional.
- The National Arts Centre will be results-oriented.
- The National Arts Centre will be cost-effective and efficient.
- The National Arts Centre will be entrepreneurial.
- The National Arts Centre will be increasingly self-reliant.
- The National Arts Centre's working environment will be lively, innovative and generous.

Ce document existe également en version française.