

Island Arts Centre Society

ARTSPRING
news

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PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT No. 40022673

2009, and counting

by George Sipos

No one could say the last month or two have not been dramatic for all of us.

Between the most severe winter weather many Salt Springers can remember, the collapse of the world economy, the almost-change of our government, the near-bankruptcy of Ballet BC, and who knows what else it has not been an upbeat time.

There have been many positive notes, however. At ArtSpring we enjoyed a most wonderful Celtic Christmas concert with soprano Meredith Hall and La Nef (although unfortunately our annual Carol Singalong on December 21 succumbed to the snow) and

the Met Opera broadcast of *Thais* on Dec 20 was terrific. On top of that, the electricity did not go off on Christmas Day and all our turkeys came out crisp and golden.

Despite fears that the economic uncertainty of the times would have a negative effect on our Annual Appeal, by the end of December we came within a hair of meeting our target, a target which had been set in July, long before the big crash. We are extremely grateful to all of you who contributed to this important fundraising project, and appreciate that making a donation was a bigger sacrifice for everyone this year than in the past. We take it as a signal that you share with us a strong belief that

the arts matter vitally to our community in tough times as in good.

Our entry into 2009 also marks the beginning of ArtSpring's 10th anniversary year. We have a number of special events planned throughout the year, but especially during the spring months, which we'll keep you informed about as the time approaches. We want it to be a year in which we celebrate the mutual successes of ArtSpring, our artists and our patrons through ten years of extraordinary achievement in the performing and visual arts.

A happy and artistically fulfilling New Year to you all.

The Play's the Thing

January 17 marks the start of our 2008-09 Theatre Series, a series which this year offers three terrific plays.

You Fancy Yourself, which runs for two performances only Jan 17 & 18, is a gem of a one-woman play written and performed by Toronto actor Maja Ardal (pictured left). The play is a funny, sardonic, and ultimately uplifting and affirmative story of a young girl in 1950s Edinburgh seeking to understand herself in relation to school, friendship, family and history. Although it is a theatre piece aimed at adult audiences, it will be a terrific play to bring children to, especially pre-teen girls.

In early February, ArtSpring joins with Scott Hylands in co-producing Samuel Beckett's masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* with an all-Salt Spring cast (five performances between Feb 5 and 15). Scott, as most of you know, has had an extraordinary acting career, both on Canadian and American stages and in film and television. He will both direct *Godot* and act the role of Vladimir.

Not enough can be said to praise Beckett's play. Quite simply it is a masterpiece of 20th Century European

drama. For anyone who had to write essays about it in university and came away with the impression that it is intellectually difficult or gloomy, the stage production will be a surprise and a treat: it is funny, dynamic, utterly theatrical and, well ... deliciously outrageous. Imagine going to the pub with Mozart, or playing tennis with Picasso.

The season ends in May with seven performances (May 21 to 31) of three new short plays under the heading *If I Were Me* written and directed by Mort Ransen. Mort is also a well know Canadian theatre professional who lives on Salt Spring. You will know him as the director of the feature film *Margaret's Museum* and, more recently, as the director of last season's smash hit *Born Yesterday*, co-produced in the spring by ArtSpring and Graffiti Theatre.

Not only will this be a world premiere of three new scripts (funny, eclectic, dramatically polished gems) but will feature the lead actors from *Born Yesterday*, Tony Ulc and Jessica Lowry.

Since the series is yet to start, season subscriptions are still available at a 15% discount over individual ticket prices. Check our website (www.artspring.ca) and call the Ticket Centre 537-2102 for a subscription. Single tickets of course are also available.





Milestones in Music

George Ehring's 2009 music appreciation course begins January 21 and runs each Wednesday through March 4

Milestones in Music will explore landmark pieces of classical music associated with particular dates in history, music that took off in new directions or created new sounds. The course will place those milestones, along with other music composed at about the same time, in the context of historical events of the day. Contemporary works of art will also be shown.

As an example, the group will travel back to 1894, when Claude Debussy creates a new impressionistic musical world with the *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, while Czech nationalist Antonin Dvorak hangs out in New York fascinated by the trains and sounds of the New World, and a young Richard Strauss is preoccupied with *Death and Transfiguration* and Sibelius writes *Finlandia*.

Each evening will be devoted to the music of one specific period. As a whole, the course will include music from 1453 to 1913.

As usual, George will provide biographical information on the composers, along with irreverent commentary.

The course will run for seven weeks on Wednesday nights from 7 to 10 p.m. in the ArtSpring theatre. Cost of the course is \$50, with discounts available for youth and with all proceeds going to ArtSpring. Light refreshments will be served at intermission.

IACS Board of Directors & ArtSpring Staff

John Stewart, President; Judy Nurse, Vice-President; Scott Howe, Treasurer; Pip Moore, Secretary; Seth Berkowitz, George Ehring, Lyle Eide, Wendy Herbert, Scott Howe, Mary Rose MacLachlan, Fran McInnich, Kate Merry, Lyle Petch.

George Sipos, Executive Director; Rita Gauld, Facility and Events Co-ordinator; John Wakefield, I.T. Manager; Meghan Howcroft, Facility and Patron Services Co-ordinator; Elizabeth Nolan, Ticket Centre Manager and Manager of Volunteers; Bob Rogers, Building Manager; Susan Worrall, Bookkeeper; Marv Coulthard, Technical Director.

Jack Avison Exhibition

ArtSpring and the Salt Spring Painters Guild are pleased to present a retrospective exhibition of the work of long-time Salt Spring painter Jack Avison between January 31 and February 10.

Born in Yorkshire in 1915, Jack was employed for most of his life in the textile industry before immigrating to Canada in 1980.

It was during his career in textiles that his interest in art was born. Jack began to learn artistic techniques while overseeing a team of salesmen who sold raw materials to knitters and weavers, becoming an accomplished colourist by studying colour values while designing colour samples for the fabrics. His natural ability in this field is still evident in his current work.

Jack is a long-time member of the Salt Spring Painters Guild, and members of the guild have benefited over the years from his experience both in drawing and watercolour techniques. Jack's philosophy is to pass on as much knowledge as he can and to help those who ask for assistance.

Jack's home is like a mini-gallery where he surrounds himself with his paintings. We feel very fortunate that he has chosen this occasion to share these with the community.

This retrospective show of Jack Avison's work will feature his earlier paintings from Northern England which show a more realistic style, as well as his later work which shows a progression to a much freer, looser style. His later work demonstrates that he has truly become a watercolour artist who captures the images of his beloved west coast. The show will also feature many of Jack's drawings, which many people have never seen. Again, some of these drawings are of his earlier work, and some have been done over recent years at the Life Drawing and Portrait classes of the Salt Spring Painters' Guild.

The show will open with a festive reception on February 1 from 5-7pm, to which all are invited to congratulate Jack on the exhibition.



Nathaniel Dett Chorale



Aretha Franklin @ ArtSpring

Not in person, alas, but a video about the life and music of the great blues singer will be show at ArtSpring on Monday, February 9 at 7:30pm.

Salt Spring writer Evelyn White will introduce the film and put Aretha Franklin's career into perspective for us.

Part of the purpose of the evening is to set the stage for the live concert a few days later (Friday, Feb 13) by the Nathaniel Dett Chorale.

The evening is free for all, and is part of ArtSpring's ongoing educational series designed to help us all get the most from our concert experiences.



Recession Buster Pass

Attendance at ArtSpring events this past fall has been excellent, indicating that our audience is enjoying the seasons of classical music, jazz, dance and so on that we are presenting.

Nevertheless, with the sudden downturn of the economy, we are conscious that there are probably people in our community who would love to come to ArtSpring but may have financial difficulties in buying a ticket.



To help them, we are launching a project called the *Recession Buster Pass*. Here is how it works:

Each pass costs a dollar and entitles the pass holder to many special deals. For starters they can bring children to shows for \$5 instead of the usual \$12. They can also get two-for-one tickets to the opening night of any of our plays. Also, if they buy tickets to any two events in any of our series (except Special Events) we'll give them a free ticket to a third event. For people who carpool to ArtSpring, we'll provide a free ticket for the driver. And so on. The full range of benefits is listed both on the pass and on our web-site (www.artspring.ca).

The idea is to recognize that, while the effects of the recession have not hit Salt Spring especially hard to date, we want to ensure that the unusual financial challenges of the times do not prevent people from enjoying the arts, at a time when they possibly need them the most.

Those of you who purchased season subscriptions or individual tickets prior to Jan 1 may wonder whether you can benefit from this plan retroactively. We hope you will understand that we need to restrict these benefits to new purchases only, since the idea is to help those who have been thinking that they can't afford to come to ArtSpring to do so.

The *Recession Buster Pass* is good for the current season only, ending on May 31. Hopefully by that time the world economy will be turning around and we can all heave a sigh of relief and get on with our normal lives.

Please have a look at the specific benefits offered by the *Recession Buster Pass* and take advantage of it as you see fit. If you know someone else who you think can be encouraged to attend a concert or a play or a dance performance by the savings, why not buy a pass for them. It would be a lovely gesture.

Maya Hoffman Memorial Bursary

Kick-started by a donation from Lisa Cherry, ArtSpring has established a bursary in memory of Maya Hoffman, a Salt Spring resident who passed away a few years ago and who was a piano prodigy in her youth but was unable to carry on her musical education.

The purpose of the bursary is to assist young piano students with the costs of taking lessons or of participating in workshops, residencies and festivals.

Full details of the bursary are set out on our web site. The web site includes information both about how to apply for a bursary, as well as how to make donations to the Bursary fund.

Poetry Night at ArtSpring


ArtSpring Executive Director George Sipos spends much of his time at work, but not all of it. In other parts of his life he is also a poet. His book *Anything But the Moon* was published in 2005 and nominated for a BC Book Award in 2006.

You will have an opportunity to hear him read from his work on Friday, January 23 when he joins with Toronto poet Sue Sinclair to give a joint reading at 8:00pm at ArtSpring.

Sinclair is one of the finest younger generation poets in Canada whose fourth book of poems, *Breaker*, has just been published by Brick Books. Here are a few lines from one of her poems, to give you a little taste:

*The sun is lowered
like a miner in a cage. Solemnly
it sinks under the horizon,
solemnly night appears.
You concentrate on the slow descent
as though your thoughts could keep
the cable from breaking.*

The reading is free, and books will be available to be purchased and signed for posterity.

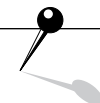



ArtSpring presents **samuel beckett's**
waiting for godot
produced and directed by **scott hylands**

with
Patrick Cassidy
Scott Hylands
Christopher Perrins
Bob Twaites
Harry Warner

Friday, February 6 at 8 pm
Saturday, February 7 at 8 pm
Sunday, February 8 at 2:30 pm
Saturday, February 14 at 8 pm
Sunday, February 15 at 2:30 pm

Ticket Centre 537-2102



Thank you so much for bringing us to Salt Spring Island. We were very impressed by the work you have done building an audience for dance. We were impressed also by the quality of the response to our work.

The audience seemed very engaged in the performance and the talk after the show was wonderful. I thought the audience entered into a really deep level of discussion. It was great for us because we learn more about the work through this level of interaction with the audience. I was truly sorry we had to cut it short to rush off to the ferry.

Karen Jamieson

**GISS Gr. 11/12 Drama****Hotel Historia**

**Thursday & Friday Jan 15 & 16,
7:30pm**

Hotel Historia is an original play, written, designed, produced and performed by GISS's own Acting 11/12 class. The play is a survey of theatre history with Ancient Greeks, Elizabethans, Classical French comediennes, Naturalists, Realists and Absurdist all together in a British Farce turned Murder Mystery. WOW! This humorous play is a must see, with something for everyone guaranteed. All seats \$8



**John Relyea as
Mephistopheles**

**La Damnation De Faust –
Berlioz**

Metropolitan Opera Encore Broadcast
Saturday Jan 17, 10:00am
Robert Lepage, one of theater's most imaginative directors, applies his artistry to Berlioz's contemplation of good and evil. Using projections, Lepage has created a vision for La Damnation de Faust that seamlessly marries art and technology. Marcello Giordani stars in the title role opposite Susan Graham as Marguerite and John Relyea as Méphistophélès. James Levine conducts this rarely staged masterwork.

**You Fancy Yourself**

**Saturday Jan 17, 8:00pm & Sunday
Jan 18, 2:30pm**

Written and performed by Maja Ardal. This one-woman tour de force by Toronto actress Maja Ardal depicts the life of a young girl in 1950s Edinburgh as she comes to terms with the pressures of school, friendships, loneliness and all the messy humour and tenderness of being alive.

"This is one of the most heartfelt evenings of theatre I've seen in years. Maja Ardal has a seamless way of moving from character to character in this penetrating look at class, gender and the iron-hearted fist of education. She has written a beautiful script and then rushed onstage to act it from the inside out." Hamilton Spectator, February 2008

Proudly sponsored by the Gulf Islands Driftwood . Single Tickets: \$25

GISS Dance

Tuesday Jan 20, 7:30pm

Students from GISS Grades 9-12 invite you to witness an eclectic mix of dance performances choreographed mostly by students themselves in the semester-end show "Groove Tonight". Featured are works by graduating dancers as well as the largest group of guy dancers yet! Tickets should be purchased in advance at ArtSpring. Showtime is 7:30 at ArtSpring.

Students \$8, Adults \$10. Come groove with us!

GISS Music

Thursday Jan 22, 7:30pm

GISS music department proudly presents its midyear concert with all of the 1st semester courses. Choirs, Jazz/blues band and an eclectic mix of the composition class will perform under the direction of Bruce Smith.

Poetry Reading:

Sue Sinclair & George Sipos

Friday, Jan 23, 8:00pm

A joint reading by a very fine young Toronto poet and a middle-aged, slightly moth-eaten Salt Spring resident. Admission is free.

Orfeo Ed Euridice – Gluck

Metropolitan Opera Broadcast

Saturday Jan 24, 10:00am

Mark Morris's acclaimed production with choreography by Morris and costumes by Isaac Mizrahi, features the artistry of Stephanie Blythe in the male title role. The alluring Danielle de Niese is Orfeo's adored wife, Euridice, who inspires the hero to face the underworld for her sake. Music Director James Levine conducts.

**Jack Avison Exhibition –
ArtSpring Galleries**

February 1 – 10

The Salt Spring Painters Guild and ArtSpring jointly pay tribute to long-time Salt Spring painter Jack Avison with a comprehensive exhibition of his work spanning over 50 years of artistic achievement. The show opens with a reception February 1 from 5-7pm.

Lobby Show

All January

Salt Spring Painters Guild group show

MEMBERSHIP

I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME AN ARTSPRING MEMBER
_____ number of memberships X \$30

As a Member, you will

- have an opportunity to purchase tickets to ArtSpring presented events before they are made available to the general public
- be kept up to date with the ArtSpring Newsletter
- have voting privileges at Annual General Meeting
- be investing in ArtSpring and providing us with the means to succeed.

DONATION

OPTION 1: ONE TIME GIFT (cheque or credit card information is enclosed)

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 I would prefer to give \$ _____

OPTION 2: MONTHLY GIFT

Here is my monthly gift of \$ _____ for the next _____ months.

Start date / / End date / /
DD MM YY DD MM YY

Total membership \$ _____ + total donation \$ _____ = total payment \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS

cheque credit card: MC VISA Card # _____

monthly debit (void cheque required) Exp date ___ / ___

Charitable Registration No. 13286 4414 RR0001 Tax receipts will be issued for donations.

As a donor, would you like your name listed in a donor honour roll? Yes No

How do you prefer to receive ArtSpring News? Mail E-mail

Please mail the completed form,
plus your payment, to ArtSpring.



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Ticket Centre: 537-2102

www.artspring.ca

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