

Date: Feb 1, 2010
Subject: **Karen Kain named honorary patron of Lady Cove Women's Choir**

Karen Kain, one of the leading classical ballerinas in the world, has become the honorary patron of the Newfoundland and Labrador-based Lady Cove Women's Choir. The announcement was made today by Donna Ball, chair of Lady Cove's board of directors, and Kellie Walsh, the choir's founder and conductor.

Ms. Ball said that the choir was seeking an honorary patron who is highly regarded nationally as a supporter and promoter of the arts and someone who might have a particular affinity to Newfoundland and Labrador, women in the arts, and choral music, adding that she is confident Ms. Kain's profile will lend prestige to the choir by ensuring its continued growth and development provincially, nationally and internationally.

"This is a milestone for Lady Cove," Ms. Ball said. "We are absolutely pleased that Ms. Kain has agreed to become our honorary patron, and to have someone with such a stellar reputation in the performing arts associated with Lady Cove represents a new era for the group. The choir has always been driven on the inspiration of the singers and supporters and audiences; we expect that Ms. Kain's entrance into Lady Cove's story will inspire us further still."

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"In my trips to Newfoundland, I have always been impressed with everyone's love of music and its integration into regular life," Ms. Kain said. "I am so happy to be able to support an organization like the Lady Cove Women's Choir that celebrates the cultural riches of this part of the country."

Ms. Walsh noted that the choir has a busy year ahead and having such aluminous honorary patron is adding momentum the choir's activities. "A number of choir members are traveling to Labrador next month to participate in a Festival 500 regional event, and we also have several concerts coming up," Ms. Walsh said. "Performing is ultimately the reason we are together as a group and the feedback we get from our audiences is tremendous, but Ms. Kain's joining us in the capacity of honorary patron will give the choir a great lift as we go about our music-making in 2010 and beyond."

Biographical Notes

Karen Kain, C.C., LL.D., D.Litt., O.Ont.

Acknowledged as one of the leading classical ballerinas of her time, Karen Kain is also one of Canada's foremost arts advocates, bringing the same passion and dedication she exemplified as a dancer to her roles as a spokesperson for Canadian culture and as the Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada.

A native of Hamilton, Ontario, Ms. Kain studied at Canada's National Ballet School, graduating in 1969 when she joined The National Ballet of Canada. After quickly rising to the rank of principal dancer, she came to the attention of international audiences when she won the Silver Medal at the Moscow International Ballet Competition in 1973. This led to a highly successful career on stages throughout the world, dancing a wide range of classical and modern roles with such companies as Roland Petit's Ballet de Marseilles, The Bolshoi Ballet, Hamburg Ballet, London Festival Ballet, Paris Opéra Ballet and the Eliot Feld Company.

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Ms. Kain retired from dance in 1997 after a nationwide farewell tour and, shortly afterwards, assumed the position of Artist-in-Residence with the National Ballet. In 1999, her role was expanded to that of Artistic Associate and in June of 2005, she was appointed Artistic Director of the company.

Ms. Kain has received numerous accolades and awards throughout her career. She is a Companion of the Order of Canada, the first Canadian recipient of the Cartier Lifetime Achievement Award and was named an Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters by the government of France. In 2002, she was honoured with a Governor General's Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement and from 2004 to 2008 was Chair of the Canada Council for the Arts. In 2007, she received the Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award for demonstrating excellence and professionalism in the performing arts. In 2008, the Karen Kain School of the Arts officially opened. The school was named after Ms. Kain for her significant contributions to the arts over her career

Lady Cove Women's Choir - Lady Cove Women's Choir is named after the community of Lady Cove in Trinity Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador. Based in St. John's, the choir of over 40 voices was established by Kellie Walsh in September 2003. In 2008 the choir won first place in the CBC Radio Competition for Amateur Choirs in the Contemporary Music category and then took first place at the 2008 Bela Bartok New Music Competition in Debrecen, Hungary.

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