



LEADERSHIP MARYLAND

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Leadership Maryland Celebrates Legacy Fund With Captivating Evening At Strathmore Music Hall



By Carol Diggs '98

The opening notes of the flute were round and deep, intoxicating and inviting: "Come closer, come look, come feel." I had sat in the flutist chair on stage earlier as Eliot Pfanstiehl, President and CEO of the Strathmore Hall Foundation, let us overtake the stage at the Music Center at Strathmore. Eliot is also facilitator for Leadership Maryland's many discussions on topics ranging from education and healthcare and to the state's prison systems.

But this evening, we were captivated by the Music Center. "Every space in this center," Eliot told us, "has the opportunity to generate dual income." From the spring-floored dance studios to the large, sound-proof orchestra rehearsal halls to the beautiful Lockheed Martin lounge, with its 65-foot tall windows overlooking the rolling hills bathed in spring blossoms and "Lake Strathmore," the hall is, every inch, beautiful and functional.

As I sat on stage during our visit, I could see why this hall is a favorite of musicians and singers. Placido Domingo made a special trip to Strathmore and called it one of the best halls in which he has ever performed. The acoustics of the hall are like the inside of a fine violin, perfectly resonating and spinning the sound to the ear. The hall is built into a hill, and the seats are closer to the stage than in many halls, creating an intimacy between performer and listener. From the stage, I could see how the music could touch every seat, every listener and every open heart. It was healing and invigorating.

Our program was exquisite: Leadership Maryland supporters were invited to take a "behind the scenes tour" of the hall, with a wine and cheese reception and a wonderful concert by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, known as the BSO at Strathmore. The concert focused on Monet and the Impressionists, bringing together both the visual artists

and impressionist composers. Mark Mobley, the NPR commentator from the Peabody Award-winning "Performance Today" program, provided an enlightening and engaging commentary on the art and music.

Debussy's *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un faune* (Prelude to The Afternoon of a Faun) was breath-taking in its delicacy, delicious in its intensely intimate and personal style. The second piece, Maurice Ravel's *Scheherazade*, *Ouverture de Féerie*, recalled those thousand and one nights of stories, woven by a new bride who wanted to stay married rather than be committed to the fate of previous wives! The story of Ravel's manuscript—which was lost for over seventy-five years as it passed from Ravel's hidden treasures to Ravel's brother, to the brother's masseuse and housekeeper and finally to her husband, a hairdresser, who bequeathed the manuscripts to his second wife—is almost as tantalizing as the music itself.

The second half of the program

focused on Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3, the Eroica—the Heroic*. Beethoven originally was thinking of naming the piece after Napoleon Bonaparte, because the music was new and daring, much like the leader. But when Napoleon declared himself Emperor, Beethoven cut out the title and replaced it with the Heroic title.

The music is a trip in itself, from the first energetic *Allegro con brio* to a funeral march to a dance-like *Scherzo* to the *Finale*, in which I thought I heard the charging horse of Napoleon. But, of course I was mistaken—it was probably Beethoven's horse I heard, galloping after the hunt and toward the sunset, with colors as brilliant as copper over Lake Strathmore and hearts as warm as the deep friendships between Leadership Maryland colleagues and our fearless facilitator Eliot Pfanstiehl.

The evening was both a recognition and a celebration of those who had significantly contributed to the

Legacy Fund of Leadership Maryland, ensuring the future of the program by helping to defray increasing expenses and thereby avoiding future tuition increases. Howard Miller, a founder of the Leadership Maryland program and the chairman of fundraising, said the Legacy Fund is "clearly the last thing needed for the foundation of the organization; it will support the organization for another 25 years."

Leadership Maryland is open to leaders from of all walks of life who have a sincere concern about the future of Maryland and a personal commitment to shape that future. For more information, contact Leadership Maryland, 2661 Riva Road, Suite 340, Annapolis, MD 21401 (www.leadershipmd.org).

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