

# Friends of Chamber Music Benefit

June 8, 2003

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I'm Steven Karbank, the Chairman of the Friends of Chamber Music Board of Directors.

Hearing Nathan Granner's wonderful voice this evening reminds me of when I was young, my mother, who has a voice of opera star quality, would turn on the intercoms throughout the house to the Saturday afternoon performances of the Metropolitan Opera. She'd really pump up the volume. It used to drive me bananas. But in retrospect, what it did do, as well as the many concerts to which my parents took me, was tune up my hearing and sharpen my appreciation of music, even though at the time I was not terribly excited about it. The moral of the story is, expose your children and your grandchildren to great music and they'll likely be the better for it, even if they don't realize it at the time.

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I'd like to thank all of you who, with your enthusiasm and your funds, have supported this extraordinary musical odyssey that has been the Friends of Chamber Music for the last 28 years. Because of you we have world caliber music in Kansas City year in and year out.

The Friends is very fortunate to have a wise and dedicated Board of Directors. It is a great pleasure to work with fellow Board members David Eisenberg, Janice Newberry, Tom Gill, Mark Viets, Jane Chu and of course, the inimitable Cynthia Seibert, the Friends Founder and Executive Director.

Our staff is the very best group the organization has ever had. Marketing Director, Marci Chiasson; MusiConnection Coordinator and Production Manager Kim Miller; Ticketing Manager Christina Snider; and Development Coordinator Julia Scherer do excellent work for the Friends. They're smart, well organized and believe strongly in the mission.

The Friends of Chamber Music's many volunteers, regrettably too many to name individually, make a big, big difference in our ability to provide you,

our constituents, with excellent musical experiences. We thank all of you who have devoted your valuable time.

One other person worthy of special mention is the late Bill Levi, the Friends first Board President. We will fondly remember Bill's efforts on behalf of the Friends, his love of music and his enthusiasm for his precious cello. We will deeply miss Bill.

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It's reasonable to wonder why we've included the wine auctions as part of this event. There are a couple of reasons. The first is purely financial: we're trying to raise some money. But in an important sense, the second reason is more compelling. There is a *connection* between music and wine. Each musical creation, like each bottle of wine, has a kind of soul, its own personality and history. Each is an expression of human effort, experimentation, refinement and creativity. The appreciation of great music and wine reflects a person's capacity to be *moved* by something *exceptionally fine*. And certainly both music and wine give joy to the senses. I read recently a quote from J.D. Salinger in concert program notes on Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony and its chorus, Schiller's Ode to Joy. He said: "The most singular difference between happiness and joy is that happiness is a solid and joy is a liquid." The Friends of Chamber Music may not be able to insure you that **solid** state that is **Happiness**, but we can certainly bring you the *flowing musical elegance and lushness* that is **Joy**.

We look forward to seeing all of you this fall when the concert season, and the MusiConnection and What Makes It Great programs begin again. Thank you and good evening.

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