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Dear Members

This is my first newsletter as Chairman of the Friends and I look forward very much to continuing and expanding the valuable contribution the Friends and its members make towards the promotion of classical music in Cape Town and surrounds. Before saying something about the immediate and exciting plans that the Friends are busy with, let me firstly pay tribute to Ruth Allen who has, over many years, made such a sterling contribution to the work of the Friends, most recently as its Chairman. We are delighted that she did not elect to leave the Friends following her retirement from that position but that she is still as active as ever, this time in her role as Vice-Chairman. We trust that she will long remain with the Friends and continue to spread her infectious enthusiasm for its activities. Thank you, Ruth!

The recent soirée at which we were fortunate to have the wonderful talents and musicianship of Nina Schumann, Luis Magalhães, Maria du Toit and Peter Martens in concert was a very successful affair and guests at the sold-out venue were enthralled by a superb chamber music programme. We are looking at possibly arranging another soirée before the end of the year, this time with that neglected, but nevertheless "King of instruments", the organ, as a primary focus. I will be keeping you informed of how we are progressing.

We have been saddened to learn, and it is a source of great regret, that Maria du Toit will be leaving Cape Town at the end of June to pursue her career in Europe. Her fabulous talent will be sorely missed and I am sure that I speak on behalf of each and every member of the Friends when we wish her well in her future endeavours. We hope that she will come back to Cape Town regularly as a soloist with the Orchestra!

Please diarise Wednesday, 23 July 2014 when the Friends will be holding its Annual General Meeting at Artscape. There are a number of important matters that the meeting will have to consider so I encourage you to attend. The agenda for the meeting and the appropriate documents will reach you during the course of June, so please look out for that.

As you know the Friends annual Quiz is set for the evening of 4 August 2014 at the Glen Country Club. There are only 17 tables (of 10) available and bookings have been fast and furious. It is a fun evening with Dave Buda conducting proceedings and a delectable home-made soup and bread supper included in the cover charge of R100 per person. Please be in touch with your usual quiz friends and book your table with Henk Rubidge on 021 439 4656 or 082 974 1602.

I am sure that all of you are familiar with St Luke's Hospice which provides palliative care to persons living with life-threatening illnesses, assisted by a team of professional doctors, nurses, social workers and caregivers. Care is provided primarily in the patient's own home irrespective of colour, religion or their ability to pay.

In support of the Hospice, the Allschlaraffisches Symphonic Orchestra from Germany will be presenting a concert on Sunday 8th June at 6pm at the City Hall in aid of the Hospice. "Schlaraffia" is a fellowship of men who, with like-minded endeavours, strive to cultivate the arts and a sense of

humour, following an established ancient ceremony whose main credo is to cherish friendship amongst one another. It originated in Prague in 1859 from the disenchantment of artists and fine art patrons with the established Austrian, German and Helvetian theatrical community which reached its heyday in the 1850s, with its credo: "In arte voluptas!". Until today, many members are still artists by profession and as such they formed the ASO – "Allschlaraffische Symphony Orchestra" – with over 60 members. Their repertoire consists of international classical music with an Austrian/German touch as well as many of their own compositions. The orchestra will be visiting South Africa for the first time, at their own expense, in June 2014. Starting on 8 June 2014 in the City Hall in Cape Town, they will also give performances in Johannesburg and Pretoria. The proceeds of the Cape Town performance will go entirely to St Luke's Hospice and the Wynberg Rotary Club. It is indeed a great cause worthy of support!

The last season of the Cape Town Philharmonic which came to an end at the end of May was a wonderful mix of classical music and the soloists and orchestra alike were all on top form. The next season starts in August and booking has already opened, so get you tickets as soon as possible. In the meantime you also bear in mind the Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival that runs from 4 to 13 July 2014. It has a delightful programme.

One of the great contemporary violinists, Pinchas Zuckerman, will be performing in Stellenbosch and at the City Hall on 19 and 22 August 2014 and will be playing the Bruch and Mendelssohn violin concertos. I expect these concerts quickly to be sold-out so get your tickets soon.

It is also appropriate for FOM to extend heartiest congratulations to Dr Barry Smith who is celebrating his 75th birthday this year. Barry has made an enormous contribution of more than 50 years of service to music in Cape Town and we thank him for his dedication and wish him well for the future.

Our new web site is constantly being updated and expanded. Please have a look at it and to let us know how you experience it and what you would like to see included in the site in addition to what it already contains. The Website includes an on-line membership form: please encourage your friends to become members of FOM.

The site can be found at www.fomct.com.

Happy listening to your favourite classical music!

Best wishes

Derek Auret: Chairman
FRIENDS OF ORCHESTRAL MUSIC