

# An open border for arts

Canadian and American creatives gather in New York to toast the power of artistic endeavours

NOLAN BRYANT | SAT. JUNE 15, 2019

■ SOCIETY

COUNCIL FOR CANADIAN AMERICAN RELATIONS GALA, NEW YORK



For nearly 50 years, the Council for Canadian American Relations, which was founded by U.S. banker David Rockefeller and then-prime-minister Pierre Trudeau, has sought, through the arts, to foster and encourage awareness, understanding and appreciation between the two countries. Since its founding, the CCAR has supported more than 170 arts and culture organizations, lent and given many works of art and provided financial assistance to myriad causes, campaigns and cultural programs that share in the organization's aim to spark cross-border dialogue through the arts. To celebrate it all, and to raise funds to help further the council's mission, supporters and culture leaders from both countries gathered in New York on May 13 for a swish biennial black-tie dinner, this year co-chaired by **Ellen Kratzer** and **Gail O'Brien**. Since 2014, the event has also honoured individuals who embody the focus of the organization. This year, inside the Metropolitan Club, legendary Canadian actor Christopher Plummer and American arts advocate and philanthropist Jo Carole Lauder were honoured, and the organization gave its inaugural Creative Leadership Award to Cirque du Soleil co-founder **Guy Laliberté**.

Just as it was at its founding, the council is supported by an exceptional group of political and business leaders: Henry Ford II, Armand Hammer and Bluma Appel were among them then, and among them today are theatre impresario **David Mirvish**, CIBC's **Jay Smith** and **David Binet**, president and chief executive of the Woodbridge Company Ltd., who, it was announced at this latest gathering, will take the reins as chair of the council. (Woodbridge is the owner of The Globe and Mail.) I was a guest at the Woodbridge table, alongside the newly installed director of the National Gallery in Ottawa **Alexandra (Sasha) Suda**, Harbourfront Centre CEO **Marah Braye**, National Ballet artistic director **Karen Kain** and my seatmate **Françoise Lyon**, chair of the National Gallery's board of trustees. At neighbouring tables were philanthropic types, including honorary gala chair **Nona Macdonald Heaslip**, and fellow Canadian big-givers **Rita and Charles Bronfman** and **Rosamond Ivey**, as well as **Agnes Gund** and **Judy Nay**, both of New York. There were plenty of Lauders too, there to celebrate Jo Carole, among them her husband **Ronald**, brother-in-law **Leonard** and daughters **Aerin** and **Jane**. Dotting the room were members of the museum director set including the Museum of Modern Art's **Glenn Lowry**, the Art Gallery of Ontario's **Stephan Jost** and Montreal Museum of Fine Arts's **Nathalie Bondil**, as well as painters **Frank Stella**, **Larry Poons** and sculptor **Joel Shapiro**.



Norman Jewison and Christopher Plummer



Jo Carole Lauder



David Mirvish and John Zeppetelli



Rosamond Ivey



"Sis" Harriet Bunting Weld



David Binet and Marah Braye

PHOTOS BY NOLAN BRYANT/THE GLOBE AND MAIL