

# Big bucks for bottles at Bacchanalia

**TOWN TALK | Gala dinner and wine auction raises \$559,000 for Vancouver Playhouse Theatre**



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**Andre St. Jacques and chef-companion Melissa Craig saw a donated Bearfoot Bistro dinner fetch \$37,000.**



**Goldcorp boss Ian Telfer sponsored and wife Nancy Burke chaired the Bacchanalia gala that raised \$559,000 for the Playhouse Theatre on Wednesday.**



**Metropolitan Opera's \$15,000 Grand Final prize may ease UBC student Simone Osborne's climb to the bigs.**



**Tanya Todd with date Ray Signorello, who gave much wine to Bacchanalia's auction and banquet.**



**Bacchanalia-attending Sandy Reimer's husband Max will become the Playhouse's artistic managing director.**

personality when I met her. She knows exactly what she wants in life, and nobody's going to stop her. I am very excited to see she's like that."

Nominated for a Genie award for the screen adaptation of her own mystery-novel, *The Tracey Fragments*, Medved likens motherhood to the creative process. "I get an idea, but then it has its own trajectory. I just have to settle back and let it happen."

**THE TRACEY FRAGMENTS** involves a woman who finds herself on a bus, wearing nothing but a transparent shower curtain during a Winnipeg blizzard.

**DOWN PARRYSCOPE:** Okanagan-based **Anthony von Mandl** has produced something new at his Mission Hill winery. It is son **Anthony Sebastian Gibson von Mandl**, born to **Dr. Debra Gibson**. Let's bet a higher note will soon chime from an addition to Mission Hill's 50-metre family bell tower.

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**BACK TO BACCHANALIA:** Incoming Playhouse Theatre artistic managing director **Max Reimer** got a lesson in hit production Wednesday. That was at the Hotel Vancouver, where four-time chair **Nancy Burke** fronted the Bacchanalia gala-auction that will fund a chunk of Reimer's repertoire. More than ever, too, since the event reportedly raised \$559,000 — \$105,000 above 2007's running.

Auctioneer **Barry Scott** needed snowshoes to wade through a blizzard of money as every bottle, case or dolly-load of donated wine sold above its stated value.

Canaccord Capital president **Paul Reynolds** gave a \$20,000 case of 1982 Chateau Mouton Rothschild that sold for \$37,500. Woodland Investments' bottle each of '83 Chateaux Mouton, Latour, Margaux and Lafite Rothschild fetched \$14,500 — \$11,000 over estimate. Mining gazillionaire **Frank Giustra** donated a \$17,500 magnum of 1982 Chateau Petrus, for which Goldcorp firm head and gala presenting sponsor **Ian Telfer** bid \$46,000, then said he would give it back to pal Giustra.

Sporting a swept-back coif by **Iveta** at the Marine Hairstyling shop mega-miners favour, Telfer is the hyper-connected Burke's husband and, like her, contributes much to Bacchanalia's buoyancy. The theatre company doubtless hopes to keep them doing so as long as it can.

**CRAIG'S SHOPPING LIST:** Whistler's Bearfoot Bistro owner **Andre St. Jacques** donated a champagne dinner for 10 to Bacchanalia. It fetched \$37,000. But his four-year executive chef and two-year personal partner **Melissa Craig** won the Canadian Culinary Championships Feb. 7-9, partly by feeding 150 folk for \$400. She spent \$350 on lobster, the rest on bread and smoked pork, and produced a soup-and-sandwich combo that dazzled adjudicators.

Switching crustaceans for the final round, Craig served coconut, lemon-grass and crab soup; crab coquille with mango croquette and basil oil; and crab salad in a cone of rolled bamboo leaves with soy-sauce-flavoured pop rocks.

**BATE SWITCHED:** Victoria-raised investment banker-winemaker **David Bate**, 40, donated one per cent of his South African Leopard Frog operation's

current vintage to Bacchanalia — in one bottle. It was a 17-litre Melchior of Tribe wine, which blends South African Pinotage grapes with their French Pinot Noir and Cinsault "parents". Also intercontinentally, Coast Salish artist **Jodi Wilson** designed Tribe's label.

"I make a lot of money in banking to lose a lot of money in wine," Bate said as the \$10,000-value bottle fetched \$14,000 at auction.

**LOW FALUTIN':** With one of her bikinis fronting *Sports Illustrated's* ultra-coveted 200 swimsuit edition, you'd think Hastings-at-Cambie designer **Anna Kosturova** might party at global glamour spots. Not at the Pender-at-Seymour Malone's pub, that is, where she and pals chugged \$3 Zin Martinis and danced to the fez-wearing geezer band Highballs Thursday.

**DEAR BABE INDEED:** University of B.C. opera student **Simone Osborne** once wowed varsity president **Stephen Toope** and guests with a full-vamp rendition of Puccini's aria *O Mio Babbino Caro*. Now she's done it to New York's Metropolitan Opera judges. As one of the Met's five Grand Finals winners, Icelandic-Persian Osborne received \$15,000 and a boost up operadom's career ladder. She'll sing in the premiere of **Lloyd Burritt's** opera *The Dream Healer* at the Chan Centre Sunday.

**ART STARTER:** Philanthropist and Polygon Group chair **Michael Audain** is stoked by a little-reported cultural jackpot this month. It's Victoria's \$150-million endowment for the B.C. Arts Council that "will throw off \$8 million a year [in interest], and increase the council's budget by 50 per cent," BCAC board member Audain said.



**Michael Audain says Victoria's \$150-million endowment will double the B.C. Arts Council's budget.**



**Donating a 17-litre bottle from his Stellenbosch vineyard, David Bate enriched the Playhouse by \$14,000.**



**To novelist-screenwriter Maureen Medved, writing and babies mean you must 'settle back and let it happen'.**

**AND BABY MAKES ONE:** New parents — especially fathers — anxiously study babies for signs of themselves. But author, screenwriter and University of B.C. assistant creative-writing professor **Maureen Medved** saw something else after delivering daughter **Mina Stone** in December.

"I expected to see some of my own or my partner's family in her," Medved said. "But she was completely her own person [and] fully formed with her own



**After making Sports Illustrated's swimsuit edition cover, Anna Kosturova celebrated at Malone's pub.**