

The Canadian Institute of Child Health proudly announces 2007 National Child Day Award Recipient: Boris Brott



Boris Brott is an internationally-recognized Canadian conductor who has developed eight Canadian orchestras. He enjoys an international career as guest conductor, educator, motivational speaker and cultural ambassador and has a particular commitment to the development of new audiences and young artists.

In the 1960s and 70s Brott led in the challenging effort to

programme a series of one-hour Introductions to the Orchestra for pre-kindergarten to High School ages with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's Young Peoples' Concerts. It is estimated that Boris has introduced classical music to one million children over the course of his career. He has written over 300 scripted concerts for students with titles such as *Welcome Bach*, *Meet Mr. Beethoven*, *Trick Or Treat to a Wicked Beat*, and *There's an Animal In My Orchestra!* His education concerts combine visuals, dance, narration and interactive activities for spellbound young audiences. Brott is the principal Education & Family Conductor at the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa. He enjoyed a long tenure as head of education & outreach at the Toronto Symphony Orchestra before that. His innovative approach to music education concerts have been adopted in one form or another by nearly every major orchestra in North America.

In 1989, Brott identified the importance of pairing young people who have just graduated from music studies with "mentor" musicians from Canada's finest orchestras in an "Academy" setting. Thus was born the National Academy Orchestra of Canada, which was recognized as a National School by the Department of Canadian Heritage in 1999 alongside the National Ballet School and National Theatre School. It has become Canada's leading professional training orchestra. Today, the National Academy Orchestra auditions 400 students between 18-30 years old from across Canada each year for a coveted 50 spots in the NAO program. Successful students go on to participate in the hands-on combination of rehearsal, performance, masterclasses and seminars in Hamilton and Toronto each year. Brott has described the experience as "articling or internship for musicians, much as doctors, lawyers and plumbers apprentice with professionals in their fields." NAO graduates go on to play with Canada's finest orchestras and become teachers and entrepreneurs in their own communities. The NAO is the only program of its kind in Canada and is comparable to the Orchestra of the New World in the United States.

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Brott himself was mentored by legendary conductors Leonard Bernstein, Pierre Monteux and Walter Susskind over the course of his early career. In 2006, he was voted one of the top five Greatest Hamiltonians of All Time by *Hamilton Spectator* readers and was given a Lifetime Achievement Award by Tourism Hamilton. He is a recipient of an honorary doctorate from McMaster University, the Order of Ontario and is an Officer of the Order of Canada.

