

Sept 07

WR Concerts eyes award

Alex Browne

Arts Reporter

White Rock Concerts, which celebrated its 50th season this year, is in line for a prestigious national award.

The concerts series has been nominated for the Presenter of the Year award by the Canadian Association of Arts Presenters (CAPACOA), an arts service advocacy agency with over 200 members across Canada including theatres, artists, volunteer concert societies, symphony orchestras, managements and government agencies.

According to the nomination, the Presenter of the Year award recognizes "excellence and achievement by a volunteer or professional organization in programming and professionalism, or contribution to community life and, or the touring sector."

Awards will be handed out at CAPACOA's annual Ottawa conference in early November.

South Surrey's George Zukerman, internationally-noted bassoon virtuoso, has been artistic director of the concert series since its inception.

"I'm very pleased," he said.

"It'll have to be voted on by someone, but I think we've got a good run at it."

Zukerman acknowledged that having a letter of support from famed Canadian tenor Ben Heppner,

who sang for the series in January - a feather-in-his-hat coup for himself and the board - has done no harm for White Rock's chances.

"I was wonderfully impressed with the organization and enthusiasm of their sold-out memberships series," Heppner wrote.

He also praised White Rock Concerts' role in helping smaller communities in rural B.C. schedule performances as part of a province-wide tour, while presenting a major concert for its own audience.

"None of this would have come about without White Rock Concerts' original initiative," he wrote.

Meanwhile, the series is about to debut a new sold-out season, including an extra concert next March - by the Vancouver Chamber Choir directed by Jon Washburn - at no extra cost to subscribers.

Season opener, Oct. 19, presents the Kodaly String Quartet from Budapest.

The quartet, first formed at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest in 1966, has continued to exemplify the high standards of the rich Hungarian musical tradition through more than four decades of international appearances.

The group is also renowned for its critically-acclaimed recordings.