

REMARKS BY ANDREA ROGERS 6/26/2010

Wow. Thank you for this magnificent evening. You know it is all a total surprise. I was barred from the theatre yesterday and today, and made to promise not to look at the program, so it is a wonderful surprise. And what proof positive for why we need stages, and what talent a community can spawn. Special thanks to all of you performers, including those still to come.

Thank you to Christina Weakland and all the Flynn staff, to Chico Lager, the Flynn Board, and all those who planned tonight, and to the crew and all who helped,

How happy I am to look out at all of you – friends, supporters, believers! Witness tonight and you know we have created something extraordinary together!

You have showered me with so much love and attention for which I am deeply grateful. Thank you ALL.....

This is not the end of an era. It is a passing of the torch, a torch you have lit with your support and your presence, and now with your wonderful gifts to Andrea's Legacy Fund.

I have had such an amazing journey

– through floods and pickets, worrisome debt and campaign triumphs

– through progressive capital projects, each making our home for the arts more functional and more beautiful.....

– And with amazing performances, year in and year out.

I am so thrilled now that there is a fund in my name to help secure our future. It doesn't get any better than this.

I suspect you all know that the live arts are fragile. They need to be nurtured to remain vibrant.

Yes, they are good for the economy but more important they are food for our souls.

They help us plumb the depths of our feelings, rearrange our thinking, and celebrate in community. They inspire our own creativity

Please don't ever take the arts for granted.

Protect them for their beauty and magic, their connection to other cultures, and also to support freedom of expression, experimentation and questioning.

I look out at you and know I am preaching to the choir. I know you will keep the flame lit under the inspired new leadership of John Killacky, who is here tonight.

I've been to many performances but never to an evening like this. Bless you and thank you. I won't be a stranger, and I hope you won't be either.