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# Carla Bruni-Sarkozy On Art, Philanthropy



## Face to Face

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**Stephanie Dahle**, Contributor

French President Nicolas Sarkozy is used to being the center of attention during state visits, but it is his wife [Carla Bruni-Sarkozy](#) that is attracting the majority of attention in their latest trip to America.

The former supermodel and singer/songwriter spent Monday in New York City launching a new program through her philanthropy, The [Carla Bruni-Sarkozy](#) Foundation. Funded by an American donor, the program is providing scholarships for college students studying the arts to do an exchange program between New York City and Paris.

I spoke with Bruni-Sarkozy about her passion for the arts and why she believes cross-cultural exchange is important.

[Video: Carla Bruni-Sarkozy On Art](#)

While Bruni-Sarkozy has often stood by her husband's side, this time he was there to support her as he helped kick off the day by attending a small celebration at the French Institute-Alliance Francaise in New York. "I am very proud of Carla's foundation and really happy to see the project becoming real," President Sarkozy said in French to the small crowd over flutes of champagne and small breakfast pastries. His wife, with a gray pencil skirt and her hair neatly swept up, beamed by his side.

"New York City is a world city," Sarkozy emphasized, "And French culture is very important."

The couple went around the room to greet each of their guests and spent about 10 minutes chatting with those in attendance. Bruni-Sarkozy charmed a group of besotted women, telling them how much she loved America and how she and her husband dream of road-tripping on Route 66.

Bruni-Sarkozy spent the rest of the day touring The Julliard School and New York University, both colleges selected for the exchange program slated to beginning this summer. At Julliard, the school's president took Bruni-Sarkozy on a tour of their remodeled facilities and showed her original manuscripts from Beethoven and Mozart. "Can we actually touch it?" she asked in English before delicately handling the score. "It's a little scary to touch. You don't want to drink coffee around it!"

"It breathes real work," Bruni-Sarkozy said as she translated some of the Italian music directions into English. "It's fantastic."

Bruni-Sarkozy seemed to most enjoy watching the students rehearse their various arts-- her face lit up watching student

musicians practice and blew them a kiss when she left. During a portion of an acting performance, Bruni-Sarkozy was on the edge of her seat, reacting to students' drama and calling out "Bravo!" at the end. She even stopped the tour at one point to back track down a hallway and sneak into a jazz rehearsal, smiling broadly before slipping inside the room for a few moments to listen.

The Sarkozy's whirlwind trip to the United States will culminate in a private dinner tonight with President Obama and First Lady [Michelle Obama](#) at the White House.